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**GUATIMALA,**  
OR, THE  
UNITED PROVINCES OF  
**CENTRAL AMERICA,**  
IN 1827—8;

BEING  
**Sketches and Memorandums**

MADE DURING  
A TWELVE MONTHS' RESIDENCE  
IN THAT REPUBLIC.

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BY HENRY DUNN

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NEW YORK:

G. & C. CARVILL, BROADWAY.

1828.



4-8070

*Southern District of New York, ss.*

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FRED. J. BETTS,

*Clerk of the Southern District of New York.*

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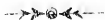
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## PREFACE.



THE following sketches have been published chiefly from the conviction that Central America is in great measure unknown ground.

In order to insure the correct statement of historical events, the author requested the late British Consul, as well as the Consul General of the Low Countries, to examine his MS. The former was occupied in doing it a few days before the melancholy event happened which occasioned his death; and to the friendship of the latter gentleman, in whose company he made the tour, which forms the last part of his book, the author is indebted for many valuable communications.

He is aware that there are individuals who will complain of his work not being more exclusively religious. To such he can only reply that piety was intended to sanctify, not to exclude the business of the world; and in his opinion, in order to do good in any country, it is necessary to *know* it, not merely in a moral and religious point of view, but politically and statistically.

Considerable trouble has been taken in order to procure a map for insertion, but after a careful examination of all those which have yet been published, the idea has been laid aside, because it was found impossible to obtain one, which on account of numerous and important errors, was not more calculated to mislead than to inform.

## PART I.

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### JOURNEY FROM ENGLAND TO THE CITY OF NEW GUATIMALA BY THE BAY OF HONDURAS.

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#### CHAPTER I.

*Voyage to the Bay of Honduras,—Sun set,—  
Night at sea,—West India Islands,—Jamaica,  
—English Quay.*

A FAVOURABLE voyage across the Atlantic cannot of necessity be very rich in incident. Each succeeding day bears the features of its predecessor, and its events are only varied by perhaps a sail in the distance, or the appearance of some one of the various inhabitants of the deep. In the absence of all the artificial excitements of society every object acquires an interest, and the wonders of nature in one department at least are for a time rescued from the neglect to which they are generally condemned.

After losing sight of the shores of England, if the winds be favourable, the voyager soon finds himself rolling in the restless bay of Biscay. We entered it in the month of January.

Its dark blue waves heaved heavily—a few wandering sea gulls roamed over the face of the deep, and the sun beamed upon the waters with a warmer and a brighter ray.

From hence to the Islands the traveller must content himself with the few objects of natural history, which present themselves. To watch the grampus, the porpoise, or perhaps the great white shark playing around the vessel and darting before its bow as if offering to guide its course through the trackless deep, are the daily amusements of every landsman in these seas; and with a few flocks of stormy petrels, a wandering albatross, or that most beautiful of all the finny tribe the dorado, relentlessly pursuing its unhappy victim the flying fish, they constitute almost the only novelties.

But at sea the every day occurrences of nature seem to exhibit themselves in new forms, and acquire a freshness which clothes them with a new interest. Oftentimes will the sun set with a peculiar splendour, pouring a flood of glory over the whole horizon, and as he dips beneath the waters the reflection of his beams clothe the western clouds in a thousand different hues, abundantly supplying to the fancy golden lakes and palaces adorned with all the magic tints of a fairy creation. Nor is night without its charms. A large vessel with all her sails set, gliding gently over the bosom of the ocean, her canvass scarcely swelled by the light

breeze, and her track illuminated by the faint phosphoric light of myriads of animalculæ, is a most imposing sight; while the awful stillness which prevails over the vast expanse of sea and sky, only broken by the light splash of the white billows against the sides of their disturber, seems sufficient to calm the most agitated spirit.

At length however new objects present themselves, and the cry of "Land" awakens curiosity. With us it announced Colon's Deseada or the desired island. The appearance of this little spot is rocky and uninviting, and it is almost uninhabited. The next morning at sunrise we were amongst the islands and close to Montserrat, one of the most beautiful of them; its western side declines gently towards the sea and is covered with fruitful plantations, while the cedar and palm shade and adorn its mountains. How lamentable that nine tenths of its inhabitants should be slaves.—From this point Antigua, Nevis, St. Kitts and Guadeloupe, are seen faintly exhibiting their outlines on the horizon, and the whole forms a striking and not uninteresting picture.

A few more days and we had passed the south side of the island of Jamaica. Its appearance from the sea is singularly romantic: blue mountains encircled by clouds and clothed with verdure to the very summits form the back ground, while richly cultivated sugar

plantations interspersed with the cedar and cocoa nut, line the hills and spread along the shore. Nature here at once presents herself in her forms of wild sublimity and luxuriant beauty.

The third of March brought us in sight of English Quay, one of those beautiful little islands which adorn the entrance to the bay of Honduras ; and by the afternoon of that day we had anchored in Belize roads.

## CHAPTER II.

*Belize,--Population,--Government,--Commerce,  
--Soil,--Insects,--Climate,--Diseases,--Emi-  
gration.*

THE view of the town from the roadstead is interesting, and some parts of it highly picturesque. Its principal street stretches along the shore for a considerable distance, and consists of tolerably good houses built of wood, the lower stories occupied as stores and the upper as dwellings: cocoa nut trees interspersed among the buildings relieve the prospect, and give to the whole the character of West Indian scenery. The bay derives its chief interest from the number of pleasure boats doreys and pit pans, passing and repassing on its still waters. The latter, a species of long narrow canoe propelled by paddles, are novel to an European eye.

This settlement contains between five and 6000 souls,\* consisting of about 2400 slaves,

\* From a census taken in the year 1827 the population of Belize is as follows.

	MALES.		FEMALES.
Whites	267,	Whites	65
Coloured	585,	Coloured	452
Free Negroes	1044,	Free Negroes	374
Slaves	1606,	Slaves	804
	<hr/> 3502		<hr/> 1695

Troops 456.

1400 free negroes, 1000 coloured creoles, and from 3 to 400 whites.

The slaves are chiefly employed up the rivers in the cutting and trucking of mahogany, and are generally well treated. Their owners are probably afraid of harshness from the many opportunities the negroes have of escaping to the neighbouring Guatimalian territory and becoming free.\* The free negroes are only remarkable for their excessive indolence and pride. The moral effects of slavery are but too visible in their character. The coloured Creoles of the country, descendants of Europeans by African women, carry on mechanical trades, or keep small stores in the back streets. Many of these possess considerable property. The white population consists of merchants and their clerks, and of individuals employed in civil or military capacities by the governor.

The internal regulations of the settlement are confided to the Superintendent appointed by his

\* Since the Revolution in Guatimala from one to two hundred slaves have absconded from their masters and taken refuge in the American territory. Their owners have repeatedly applied to the Government of the Republic in order that they may be given up, but after several debates in Congress the request has been refused. Putting the rights of humanity out of the question, it seems difficult to reconcile such a demand with the common principles of reciprocity among nations. So long as England maintains the noble principle that to breathe British air is to be free, any other nation not only has a right but honours herself by following the example. It is needless to add that the application was never sanctioned by the government at home.



Britannic majesty and seven magistrates annually elected by the settlers. The market is generally ill supplied. The want of energy is so great that although every kind of fruit and vegetables would grow almost spontaneously, there is often a considerable scarcity. Turtle is procured in abundance, but like every thing else very dear.

The trade of the place is considerable; employing annually about 16000 tons of British shipping. The neighbouring Spanish provinces are supplied with British manufactures; and cedar, fustic, hides, indigo, logwood, cochineal, mahogany, sarsaparilla, tortoise shell and specie are exported: commerce is also carried on with Omoa, Truxillo, and the Golfo Dulce.

The soil is generally good, an abundance both of heat and moisture, favouring the putrefaction of a mass of organic substances, while it often proves the cause of disease, produces a stiff deep loam, capable of bringing to perfection all kinds of European vegetables, as well as the productions of the torrid zone. The difficulty of obtaining labourers is the only obstacle to the production of every thing calculated to administer to the comforts or luxuries of life. "The cactus, upon the leaf of which the cochineal insect subsists, grows spontaneously in the woods; the cotton tree, the indigo plant, the palma christi or castor oil plant, and the sugar cane all thrive on the soil, and

might be cultivated advantageously." But the free negro will not work. With a hook and line he can in half an hour provide sustenance for himself and family for the day, and with this he is content. No stimulus will arouse him. He will undertake no employment but at an exorbitant rate of wages, and even then he is careless about finishing what he commences.

Considerable quantities of land are covered with pine of a superior quality. Where these abound the soil is sandy and not so productive; it would, however, be well adapted to the cultivation of the coffee plant.

The neighbouring woods are rich in objects of natural history, and it is much to be regretted that a field which promises so much should so long have remained untrodden.

Belize, like many other settlements similarly situated, abounds with insects, which by their number and venomous properties, become a complete pest. Swarms, or rather myriads of ants, darken every household utensil, and leave no corner of any dwelling free from their intrusions; hundreds of cockroaches (the *Blatta Americana*) appear in the evening, in almost every apartment; the very chambers of the houses are not free from the unwelcome visits of lizards, centipedes, and scorpions, to say nothing of the mosquito, or of that most fruitful of all the insect tribe, the

nigus. This last diminutive little worm exercises its malignant powers chiefly upon the black population, who are always without shoes or stockings; it enters the foot between the cutis and the cuticle, where it breeds with the greatest rapidity. The only remedy is to pick them out with a needle, and pour oil into the wound.

The climate is, on the whole, more favourable than that of the West India islands. The average heat is from 82° to 85° Fahrenheit, in the shade.

Europeans chiefly suffer from remitting and intermittent fevers, caused probably by the numerous swamps which surround the settlement. The ravages of small pox are not great, as vaccination is now universally practised. In the year 1826, great numbers of children were carried off by the measles, but this disease has not since that time made its appearance. Hooping cough prevails much among the younger part of the community, and dysentery and rheumatism are not unfrequent among the full grown negroes; yet, on the whole, they may be esteemed healthy, and sometimes attain to a great age. The strong sea breeze, which blows freely nine months in the year, contributes mainly to the health of the inhabitants.

Still the heat is by far too great to make any part of this province desirable as a place for emigration; and had the memorable cacique of Po-yais, M'Gregor, had any intention of colonizing,

(which there is little reason to believe,) it is very problematical how far he could have succeeded. The miserable condition of the unhappy wretches who were deluded by his golden promises, is but too well known, and it is but justice to say, that they received, in the hour of their distress, every kindness from the settlers in **Belize**.\*

\* The Poyais territory, where this adventurer talked of establishing his deluded followers, is not literally in the province of Honduras, but consists of unappropriated territory on the banks of the Rio Tinto, or Black River, which discharges itself into the Atlantic, near Cape Camaron. Since the failure of this expedition, it has been included in the tract of country claimed by the Columbians.

### CHAPTER III.

*Black Population,—Character,—Amusements,  
—Morals,—State of Religion,—Inhabitants  
of the Mosquito Shore,—Coronation of their  
King,—Customs, &c.*

THAT slavery must necessarily have a lowering and degrading influence on the character of the slave is self-evident: but it is requisite to live among such, in order to know and feel the extent of the degradation. The moral effects of this evil, not the growth of a day or a year, but of ages, are so deep, as at first sight, almost to seem indelible. In proportion as the avarice of man has tightened the chain around his victim, has its degrading and depressing influence infused itself into his principles and habits, withered all his energies, and impeded the growth of every thing noble and elevated in his character.

If any thing could lessen our sympathy in the unhappy fate of the negro, it would be to view his debasing character, apart from the causes which have induced it. Indolent and unprincipled, he will never work, excepting when under the eye of a

superior. Fawning in the extreme, when in dread of punishment, he is tyrannical and overbearing if clothed for a moment in temporary power. His only wisdom is a species of low cunning. His only virtues belong to the brute creation,—an instinctive love of his offspring, and a species of attachment to the tyrant who rules him.

Nor is the freed African one degree raised in the scale of being. Under fewer restraints, his vices display themselves more disgustingly. Insolent and proud, indolent and a liar, he imitates only the sins of his superiors, and to the catalogue of his former crimes adds drunkenness and theft.

Such is the poor child of Africa, after centuries of subjection to the enlightened sons of Europe. The thought of what he might have been, had the same efforts been used to improve, which have been exercised to degrade, makes one shudder at the awful responsibility of those who have made him what he is.

The favourite amusement of the negroes here, as in other parts of the West Indies, is dancing. It surprises an European to observe the regularity with which these nightly entertainments are conducted; the graceful step of the dancers to the sound of the gumbey, the expensive refreshments provided, and the air of display that pervades the whole performance. The same passion manifests itself at their funerals, which are conducted in as

showy a style as possible. On these occasions they dress themselves in imitation of Europeans, and gratify their vanity by displaying all the finery they can raise. Their most joyous period is Christmas, when every slave claims a kind of temporary freedom for two or three weeks, and during this time, the settlement is in a state of riot. Dancing about the streets, night and day, is their chief employment till the accustomed period has elapsed; during this season, the militia, consisting of all the white inhabitants, is kept constantly under arms.

Crimes of a serious nature are of rare occurrence. The prison, which is large, and has its cells commodious and airy, is very thinly tenanted. In the month of March 1827, it contained only six or seven prisoners, confined for petty thefts, or similar trifling offences, and it is by no means uncommon to see its doors open.

But although crimes which come under the cognizance of the law, are not frequent, the moral state of the population is nevertheless at the lowest ebb. With few exceptions, the institution of marriage is totally disregarded. The coloured population, considered by the whites as a degraded caste, feel themselves shut out of European society, and consequently lose self respect. The females generally live in a state of concubinage with the whites, under the name of housekeepers.

and are singularly faithful to their keepers. The negroes follow the example of their superiors, and prostitution is universal.

The lamentable consequences of such a state of things, must be visible to every one. Society instead of improving, degenerates, and an effectual bar is placed to the advancement of the coloured population. Alas, that the majority of our countrymen who visit these shores, should only come, like a moral pestilence, bringing with them the contagion of their example!

The provision for religious instruction is scanty. A church has been erected at an expense of £30,000 currency, and an incumbent appointed, whose salary is considerable. His talents are respectable; but he is unfortunately one of those polished preachers, who

“Never mention hell to ears polite.”

The Baptist and Wesleyan missionary societies have each stations here. A large chapel has been erected by the former, but to very little purpose. About 30 or 40 negroes, and three or four white residents, attend the services, which are conducted precisely the same as in England. There is a Sunday school attached to this place, and the names of many children are on the books, but not more than from 10 to 20 attend on an average. This station has already cost the society several



thousand pounds. The Wesleyan missionary has but just arrived, and at present has no congregation.

The difficulties attendant on imparting religious instruction to the negroes are very great. Their language is a mixture of creole French and broken English, and it is not easy to understand their meaning; while their mental indolence is so excessive, as to lead them freely to assent to every thing, whether understood or not.

The present condition of many of our missionary stations, proves how greatly their committees have erred in taking upon themselves the expense of permanent establishments, without first deputing some well qualified individual to visit the point they had fixed upon, and to make himself well acquainted with the moral character and peculiar circumstances, both of the native population and European residents. This species of information (as needful, under such circumstances, as a knowledge of its consumption is to a merchant who establishes a commercial house) would enable them not only to choose peculiar men for peculiar stations, but in some degree to judge of the prudence of the plans their agent may be pursuing.

Connected with the established church is a free school, conducted on Dr. Bell's system, in which the Scriptures are read, but it is in a wretched

state. Not more than 50 attend, and these very irregularly, although 120 are stated as the number of scholars. There is also an auxiliary of the Bartlett's Buildings Society, but excepting in the compilation of an annual report, the labours of its committee are unheard of. No census has been taken of the number of individuals able to read or write, nor is it possible to say what number of copies of the Scriptures are in circulation, but there is every reason to suppose they are few.

Besides the negro and the creole, the Carib, the Indian, and the Mosquito man are frequently met with in Belize.

The Caribs, formerly inhabitants of the most easterly islands, are now found principally about Truxillo and Omoa, whither they were removed by the Spaniards. They are chiefly employed by the mahogany cutters up the rivers, and are little removed from barbarism.

The Indians mostly come from the interior, with letters and messages, which commissions they execute with the greatest fidelity.

The Mosquito men arrive in considerable numbers from the Mosquito Shore, which comprises the eastern part of the provinces of Honduras and Nicaragua. They possess great muscular strength, and a fine symmetry. Their tall and erect forms, little concealed by covering, their vacant countenances and long greasy hair,

give them a wild and savage appearance, and strikingly portray the powerful barbarian.

These people now consider themselves under the protection of the British government, and some of their kings have been educated in Jamaica.\* On the accession of the last king to the throne he expressed a wish to be crowned at Belize, and orders were received by his Britannic majesty's superintendent to gratify his wish, and to defray all attendant expenses.

From a friend I have received some particulars of the ceremony. On the previous evening, cards of invitation were sent to the different merchants, requesting their attendance at the court house early in the morning. At this place, the king, dressed in a British major's uniform, made his appearance; and his chiefs, similarly clothed, but with sailors' trowsers, were ranged around the room. A more motley group can scarcely be imagined. Here an epaulette decorated a herculean shoulder, tempting its dignified owner to view his less favoured neighbour with triumphant glances. There a wandering button

\* This tract of country is now claimed by the Colombian government, and, by a decree, issued in July, 1824, all foreigners are forbidden to colonize, without the permission of the republic. By a convention, made between Great Britain and Spain, in 1786, his Britannic majesty agrees to evacuate all this coast, but as the Indians still show the same inveterate dislike to the Spaniards, as formerly, they are permitted to consider themselves under the protection of England.

displayed a greasy olive skin, under the uniform of a captain of infantry. On one side, a cautious noble might be seen, carefully braced up to the chin, like a modern dandy, defying the most penetrating eye to *prove* him shirtless ; while the mathematical movements of a fourth, panting under such tight habiliments, expressed the fear and trembling with which he awaited some awful accident.

The order of the procession being arranged, the cavalcade moved towards the church ; his Mosquito majesty on horseback, supported, on the right and left, by the two senior British officers in the settlement, and his chiefs following on foot, two by two. On its arrival, his majesty was placed in a chair, near the altar, and the English coronation service was read by the chaplain to the colony, who, on this occasion, performed the part of the archbishop of Canterbury. When he arrived at that part of the service, where it is written, “ And all the people said, Let the king live for ever, long live the king, God save the king,” the vessels in the port, according to previous signal, fired salutes, and the chiefs, rising, cried out, Long live king Robert !

His majesty seemed chiefly occupied in admiring his finery, and, after the anointing, expressed his gratification, by repeatedly thrusting his hands through his thick bushy hair, and applying his

fingers to his nose! in this expressive manner, indicating his delight at this part of the service. Before, however, the chiefs could swear allegiance to their monarch, it was necessary they should profess Christianity, and, accordingly, (with shame be it recorded,) they were baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." They displayed the most total ignorance of the meaning of the ceremony, and when asked to give their names, took the titles of lord Rodney, lord Nelson, or some other celebrated officer, and seemed grievously disappointed when told they could only be baptized by simple Christian names.

After this solemn mockery had been concluded, the whole assembly adjourned to a large school room, to eat the coronation dinner, where the usual healths were drank, and these poor creatures all intoxicated with rum! a suitable conclusion to a farce as blasphemous and wicked as ever disgraced a Christian country.

The inhabitants of the Mosquito shore, like most other savages, are distinguished for their apathy. Hunger alone compels them to seek food, which is easily provided in the woods or lakes. Careless about the dressing, they devour it voraciously, and then, stretching themselves at full length, sleep till the cravings of nature again arouse them. The paddle, the harpoon, and the

canoe comprise all their wealth, and these supply all their necessities.

Enclosed by inaccessible mountains and morasses, and protected by a coast full of rocks and shoals, they are exposed to few dangers from without ; a country abounding in game and provisions, spontaneously supplies their daily wants ; a climate more salubrious than that of the West India islands, removes the necessity of clothing ; while entire freedom from the destructive ravages of hurricanes and earthquakes, enables the slightest hut to afford them sufficient shelter. In such a situation every stimulus to exertion is removed, and, in this state, they may rather be said to vegetate than to live.

Several attempts have been made to introduce Christianity amongst them, by the Dominican monks from Guatimala, but hitherto without effect.

A Mr. Fleming and his wife left England in the year 1825, for this shore, under the direction of the Baptist missionary society, but, unhappily, they both died on their arrival at Belize.

The king has expressed his willingness to receive and protect any individual who would reside as a teacher amongst them.

Of their religious belief little is known, excepting that they acknowledge a good and a bad spirit. The latter, however, is the only object of worship.

from dread of his anger ; the good spirit they consider too merciful to injure them, and plead this as a sufficient reason for neglecting to adore him.

“At their funerals they are accustomed to inter, with the body of the deceased, his paddle and harpoon, supposing that he will need them to provide sustenance in another world.”\* These slight sketches comprise all the information I have been able to gain of the inhabitants of the Mosquito shore.

Such a people cannot be uninteresting to the Christian philanthropist. Nations, still darker, and more besotted, have been visited by the messengers of Jesus, and blessed with the tidings of a Saviour's love. May it not then be hoped, that the time is not far distant, when the echoes of these hills shall join in transmitting from land to land, the sacred song, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring the glad tidings of salvation.”

\* For this, and one or two other facts, the author is indebted to “Sketches of Honduras,” a series of papers published in the Honduras Gazette.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Voyage to Yzabal,—Quays,—Settlements,—  
Coast of Yucatan,—Rio Dulce,—Pirates,—  
Castillo del Golfo.*

AFTER spending two months very agreeably in Belize, we left it on Friday, the 4th of May, on board a schooner bound for the port of Yzabal.

The light winds which generally prevail at this season of the year, prevent a very rapid progress, but the traveller is abundantly repaid by the picturesque appearance of the numerous beautiful little quays, which surround the bay on every side. Some of these have not more than a mile in circumference, and are covered with bushes; on others are to be seen a few huts, and one of them (St. George's) has several good houses, and is the favourite resort of the inhabitants of Belize.

Very near to a cluster of these quays, lies a part of the Spanish main, called, by the English, "False Bite." On the shore is a settlement of creoles, who chiefly employ themselves in raising stock



and vegetables, which are sent to Belize. The land cultivated runs close along the shore, and is backed by the mountains. It is of excellent quality, and well watered. The settlers find it healthy, and complain only of the immense number of flies, especially of the cantharis, or Spanish fly, (the *Lytta Vesicatoria* of Linnæus,) great numbers of which abound here, and are considerably more annoying than the mosquito.

Leaving this, and passing Northern Standy Creek, a settlement of Caribs, and Mullands river, where there is another small settlement of creoles, we came to an anchor at a point called Manavique, by the Spaniards, or Three Points, by the English. Before us lay stretched a rich line of coast, belonging to the province of Yucatan, low, and thickly wooded to the shore. No vestiges of inhabitants were to be seen, excepting one or two straggling huts, probably belonging to fishermen. The woods abound in game of every kind, and are said to be infested both by tigers and serpents; some of the former are of considerable size. There is, however, little doubt but that this animal, which is called, by all who frequent these shores, the tiger, is in fact the jaguar, bearing a strong resemblance to the ounce, both in size, and in the form of the spots with which his skin is diversified.

The beach swarms with the cayman, or alligator, generally small in size, although they are sometimes met with 18 or 20 feet long. These so nearly resemble the crocodile of the Nile, that they may be considered the same species, allowing for the trifling variation which difference of climate will produce. The number of sharks is also considerable.

Sailing from this point, the traveller soon comes in sight of the Rio Dulce. The entrance to this beautiful river, viewed from a distance, is enchanting, and takes a powerful hold upon the imagination. On either side are high mountains covered with the richest verdure and apparently leaning over as if to meet each other ; while the peculiar bend which the river takes very near the entrance, throws forward the woods which skirt the side of the hills, and the whole forms an archway of consummate beauty. The effect is exquisite and surpasses description.

Between these mountains the river flows in a serpentine direction for near twenty miles, and it is impossible for words to do justice to its scenery. As the vessel glides slowly and silently along, or is propelled by oars when the stream is contrary, the eye is regaled with all the varieties of foliage, which adorn the various trees and bushes, hanging over the sides of the mountains, and towering

almost to the clouds; the ear receives the mingled notes of an infinite variety of birds, singing in security among crags and precipices where the foot of man has never entered to destroy or to molest; while the discordant cry of the various tribes of monkeys inhabiting the woods, and every instant playfully springing after each other from tree to tree, gives a diversity to the scene at once novel and delightful. In addition to this, the windings of the stream are so abrupt, and the effect so varied, that it is in fact a perpetually changing picture. Nature would appear on this spot to have lavished all her beauties, nor can the most imaginative mind conceive a scene of greater loveliness.

The abundance of her gifts, are however in a considerable degree counterbalanced by the intense heat of a tropical sun, which darts its rays with amazing force between these hills, oftentimes unrelieved by the least breath of air; while the heavy dews that fall during the night, together with the damps of the rainy season, render it a dangerous habitation for man.

About half way up, the river falls into a lake 10 miles in width, and surrounded by high mountains. On its opposite side commences the upper part of the Dulce, which presents a very different aspect to the lower. The land on either side is

low and marshy, and the mountains fall into the distance.

After ascending a few miles further we anchored about 8 o'clock on a fine moonlight evening. A sultry stillness reigned on every side, disturbed only by the distant cries of the various animals in the woods—the solitary splash of some passing fish, or the gentle rippling of the stream against the sides of the vessel.

The conversation turned on the atrocities of the pirates, who infest these parts; and among other stories the history of the sacking and scuttling of the very vessel in which we then were, was related. It is a melancholy tale, but as the circumstances are of recent date, and the sufferers known, it is worth remembrance.

She was at that time manned by a captain and four men, and had on board a clerk of the house to which she belonged. They were returning from the Spanish coast to Belize, when they fell in with a schooner of similar size which they immediately recognized as belonging to the bay. This vessel it appears had been taken the day before by the pirates, who now attempted to board them. Deceived by her appearance they were totally unprepared for resistance. The wretches had no sooner placed their feet on her deck, than they proceeded to murder every soul on board, with the exception of one black man who jumped

overboard, and although wounded, miraculously escaped by swimming. Having hung the body of the master at the yard arm, they first sacked and then scuttled the vessel, supposing she would sink ; but they were too confident and careless, she drifted ashore and told her own tale—a few days after this the party landed, and soon excited suspicion by their lavish prodigality ; they were arrested and sent to Jamaica for trial, and sufficient evidence being procured against them, were condemned and executed. So quickly does the hand of God sometimes take vengeance for blood.

As the night came on we stretched ourselves upon the deck to sleep, leaving one to watch, but the excitement of these stories, together with the novelty of the situation, banished it from most of our eyes. About midnight, the lightning which had been for some time playing about the hills, became exceedingly vivid, and as its flashes glanced upon the sleepers, reclined on different parts of the deck, each one with a loaded musket and cutlass by his side, they seemed to exhibit a scene rather of romance than of reality.

At day-break we rose, and the current being still unfavourable, some of the party went into the woods to shoot, and succeeded in killing three small birds not unlike the common partridge. Every report of the musket seemed to awaken all

the echoes of the hills, calling and answering one to another as if their reverberations would never cease. One of the sailors had also dived, and brought up three fine young turtles, and these with the birds provided us no contemptible dinner.

Slowly ascending the river, and passing an immense number of beautiful little creeks, diverging to the right and left, many of which contain springs of excellent water, the traveller reaches the mouth of a second lake, where the Spaniards have erected a fort, called by them Castillo del Golfo, or the castle of the gulph. The appearance of its huts from the river is picturesque. The fort however consists only of a ruinous wall defended by about twenty carib soldiers, who live there surrounded by their families.

We landed to show our passports, and were led to the commandant's house, through rows of plantain trees, on the fruit of which he and his troops subsist. It was a miserable hut, with a clay floor not even levelled. A hammock was slung across the room in which an old woman was reclining,—a few coarse prints of the virgin, and a brass crucifix ornamented its mud walls, and two or three common wooden stools constituted the whole of its furniture. But as if to make the contrast more striking, on one of them stood several beautifully cut-glass decanters, cream jugs and tumblers, with three or

four clay jars of excellent water. One of these was handed to us with a glass, by a fine young woman, apparently about sixteen and nearly naked. The females here seemed to have lost all sense of modesty and propriety, wore considerably less clothing than the men, and appeared if possible more depraved. They perform all the manual labour, and are treated as a degraded sex: numbers of them were bathing round the vessel and some of them asked permission to come on board.

This settlement is very beautiful, and its inhabitants unconscious of their wretchedness seem to a superficial eye contented and happy.

Our passports being backed by the commandant's secretary, who seemed to have some difficulty in inscribing his name, we crossed the lake on the shore of which stands the little town of Yzabal. Here we anchored for the night, and landed early in the morning.

## CHAPTER V.

*Yzabal,—Mountain of Mico,—Indians,—Character of these Aborigines,—Superstitions,—Iguana.*

THIS port consists of about fifty or sixty huts raised at the foot of one of the mountains, and is in fact only a depot for goods passing from Belize to Guatemala.

On landing we were conducted to the commandant's house, and before him our boxes were opened, but immediately closed on an assurance that they contained nothing contraband, with "tengo confianza en vmds" "I have confidence in you," and no further notice taken of them. In one of the largest of these habitations we took up our temporary residence, boarding with the owner, and sleeping at a neighbouring hut. The provision was by no means despicable, consisting generally of soup, eggs, a hashed fowl and a clarety kind of wine mixed with water for dinner, and coffee in the morning and evening. This hut, by far the best in the place, was spacious, well built of wild cane, and covered with the leaf of the bay tree.



Considerable quantities of goods were remaining in it, waiting for mules to be forwarded over the mountains. Besides the requisite articles of furniture it contained a thermometer, a French writing desk, and about thirty volumes of books neatly bound, chiefly translations from the French, one or two of Mad. Genlis' novels, and a life of Napoleon.

About 6 o'clock every evening the drum beats to call out the military force of Yzabal, which is composed of about twenty men, not only out of uniform, but almost without dress, one wanting a hat, a second a coat, and all without shoes or stockings. These armed with rusty muskets and old swords, and totally without discipline, are its only defence.

The people are excessively indolent, sleeping the greater part of the day on mats stretched upon the floor, and lying on the ground at their house doors, talking with each other during the night. The heat is considerable, varying during the hottest months from 90 to 100° Fahrenheit, in the shade; and to Europeans the climate is very dangerous.

Our mules having at length arrived, we prepared to set out over the mountain the following morning at day break. The bustle of preparation, saddling and loading of cargo being over, we started in good spirits and good temper, one fol-

lowing another merrily, and forming a line of considerable length. Our party consisted of a lady and four gentlemen; three servants followed with provisions, and the arriero or muleteer with fifty mules loaded with goods brought up the rear. Each Spaniard was armed with a brace of pistols in holsters, and a large knife fixed in his belt, and the servants with swords.

Immediately on leaving Yzabal the traveller begins gradually to ascend the mountain, winding in a serpentine direction towards its summit, through narrow passes, lined on each side with trees. In consequence of this circuitous rout, without which it would be utterly impassable, the ascent is very gradual, and is not one continued rise, but varies according to the difficulties of the way.

After riding onward for about an hour the road becomes very steep, some of the ascents appearing almost perpendicular from their base. Over these the mules pass with amazing care and sagacity, invariably placing their feet on the same ledge of rock or treading on the same crag, over which their predecessors have passed. Many of these are worn with their footsteps, and they are never willing to change them.

On reaching the summit of one of these precipices, a most beautiful ravine suddenly burst upon our view, into which we immediately began slowly

to descend, along the beds of the different channels formed by the autumnal rains. A rivulet of clear spring water flowed murmuring along over the numerous pebbles and pieces of rock which impeded its course, a variety of trees in full luxuriance shaded it from the intense heat of the sun, while the melody of birds regaled the ear with harmony; depicting one of those scenes which poets have described, when they have sung of the days of the golden age.

At least so it seemed to us, for here we breakfasted, not on aerial food, but on good cold fowls and wine which we had taken the precaution to store for some such occasion. How far this beverage might operate on the fancies of hungry travellers, so as to lead them to exaggerate the natural beauties of the spot, must be left for the reader to determine.

The remainder of the journey over the mountain is relieved by a constant repetition of similar scenery. In some places the passes are lined by trees rising most majestically to the height of 90 and 100 feet. At other times rows of palms branching on either side form a continued gothic archway, or rather series of archways, far surpassing those of art: while in other situations the abruptness of the transition from hill to dale, and from mountain to ravine relieve the eye and considerably heighten the effect.

At times one half of a party separated by the roads are some distance in advance, and then the shouts of the muleteers calling one to another, or to their mules, and the answering whistle of the stragglers in the rear as they wind down or ascend the different glens, now appearing and then as suddenly concealed by the intervening trees, render the scene singularly picturesque. A few wandering Indians conveying parcels from Gualan to Yzabal or loaded with maize, are the only human beings to be seen till about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, by which time in favourable months the mountain is generally passed, and the traveller arrives at a small Indian town called Mico, another depot for goods.

During four months in the year it is however almost impassable, and the journey far from being agreeable is one of the most difficult and painful that can be experienced. In many instances travellers are obliged to pass the night on its summit drenched by the rains, and terrified by the proximity both of tigers and rattlesnakes.

After resting at Mico a short time, it is customary to ride forward about a league, to a solitary hut, where parties generally remain for the night on account of the superior forage for the mules. On alighting at this house we inquired for something to eat, but could get no other reply than "no hay" there is none. At length however after

considerable persuasion the female was induced to move, and in a short time two fine fowls and some eggs were produced. The servants lighted a fire, and after roasting the fowls and preparing the eggs with the addition of chocolate, we threw ourselves on the ground, and by the light of the fire ate a hearty supper. Soon after this most of the party were soundly sleeping.

Notwithstanding the excessive fatigue of the day's ride, I could not rest. During the whole of the night, some thousands of monkeys that inhabit the woods around Mico kept up a loud and discordant yell, any thing but grateful to the ear; while the light of the fire glared only upon three or four wild figures, gliding from one part of the hut to another, and appearing at such an hour and by such a light more like demons than men.

These Indians are a scattered portion of the aborigines of the country, and their original character and condition does not appear to have been much improved. Generally speaking they have the character of being trusty and harmless, and excepting when under the influence of intoxicating liquors display considerable mildness. As messengers they are very faithful, finding their way through bushes and thickets before untrodden, with a degree of instinct which is truly surprising. They subsist solely on maize, and drink little besides water, unless it be a kind of spirit called

pezzo, which is made by the rind of limes rubbed with corn, and allowed to ferment, and then mixed with honey; this they esteem a great luxury.

The maize they grind into a powder between two stones, and after moulding it into a kind of dough with water but without salt, they bake it in small cakes which they call tortillas. In appearance they are not unlike the English oat-cake, but very tasteless.

Their huts are altogether without furniture. Some of them have a hammock, but this luxury is by no means general. Their usual custom is to sleep on mats upon the floor.

These scattered families all profess the Roman Catholic religion, and are under the pastoral care of the Padre at Gualan, the nearest town to their residence, who visits them two or three times a year for the purposes of confession and absolution. The whole of them are exceedingly ignorant and superstitious, and are most completely under the dominion of their religious superior. The women of this hut had each of them small silver crucifixes suspended round their necks by light gold chains, which they seemed to regard with the highest degree of reverence.

Owing to the obstinacy of the muleteers it is almost impossible to set out early in the morning, and as the road from hence is open and unshaded by trees, this perverseness often becomes a source

of considerable distress and vexation. The inconveniences of horse or rather mule exercise under a tropical sun, are soon found not to be trifling.

After ascending for some time from Mico, the edge of an immense valley presents itself, surrounded by high mountains gradually sloping to the ground, and forming a very large circus or amphitheatre, thickly wooded on every side chiefly with pine, and having at least sixty miles of circumference. Its appearance is sublime, but the intense heat of the sun when we crossed it reflected on all sides, with scarcely a breath of air, greatly impeded our enjoyment of its scenery. The soil here was very sandy, and in some parts the face of the country completely sterile. Vegetation seemed to be entirely burned up by the rays of the sun.

Towards evening another hut appears in the distance called Iguana, and after the exhaustion produced by the heat and fatigue of the day, it is a most agreeable resting place.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Iguana,—Gualan,—Town,—Morals,—Customs,  
Intolerance,—Superstition,—Trade,—Educa-  
tion,—Prisons,—Scriptures.*

THE people of Iguana unlike those of Mico, are very accommodating, and willingly render every attention in their power to travellers; so that with very little trouble, a comfortable lodging is procured for the night; that is to say, so far as the idea of comfort can be connected with eating on the ground, and sleeping in the open air, circumstances to which the mind becomes reconciled in a much shorter time than one could imagine.

From this place to Gualan the distance is but short, consisting of only four leagues, and chiefly lying through plantations, some of them in a state of considerable luxuriance. Nearly the whole of the land along the road between Iguana and Gualan is more or less cultivated, principally by Indians, who bring the produce to market at the latter place.



Gualan although a town of inconsiderable size, is the only one of importance between Yzabal and Guatemala, (excepting Zacapa, which did not lie in our route.) The entrance to it is by the principal street, at the end of which is the plaza, or market-place, and a neat church. The houses are all of them low, consisting of one story only, with white plastered walls, and red tiled roofs, and very heavy antique windows, having balustrades before them mostly of wood.

The town is estimated to contain about 2000 inhabitants, but no census has been taken.

In Gualan as in all the other towns of Central America, there is no inn, or house set apart for the reception of travellers; we therefore accompanied our Spanish friends to the house of their agent, at which place the alcalde soon arrived to examine our packages. This he did with considerable care, although accompanied with as much civility as could be expected.

The interior of the houses generally consists of only two rooms, separated from one another by a slight wooden partition. In the one which it was our lot to occupy, the whole of us, including the family of our host, dined, and the greater part of us slept; five small beds being placed around it for that purpose. A large wooden table, (a fixture,) and some common wooden chairs, composed the rest of its furniture; two hammocks swung constantly

from one end of the room to the other, and three or four swords with several muskets, ornamented its walls.

Soon after our arrival several of the neighbours entered the house, which seemed always open to every visiter. One threw himself in a hammock, others seated themselves on the table, or on beds, and all began at once to inquire the news, and to discuss politics with the greatest vehemence, smoking and spitting on the floor most profusely.

Nothing can exceed the indolence, licentiousness, and ignorance of these people. Their only idea of freedom is, the absence of all restraint, and consequently, in manners and morals they have levelled themselves with the brute creation.

The mistress of the house, a young woman of about twenty, was a complete specimen of filth and vulgar finery. Terribly afflicted with a güegüecho, or swelling of the glands of the neck, she still had sufficient vanity to suppose herself handsome ; and dressed in a dashing printed gown, made very low in the body, with pink shoes, and silk stockings, and two gold chains hanging about her neck, she paraded the room like a sultana of the east. A more pitiable object could scarcely be seen. Her husband, an old man of about sixty, exceeded her if possible, in grossness. In this house it was our misfortune

to be obliged to remain nine days. The servants, as is invariably the case, imitate their masters, and are lazy and indolent. It is said they have considerably deteriorated since the revolution.

Immediately after rising in the morning, coffee was prepared, and about nine we breakfasted on stewed meat, eggs, frijollis or black beans, bread, and coffee. Dinner generally consisted of four courses, two dishes to each, and included beef cut up and hashed, fowls, turkeys, and sausages, but all roasted to pieces, soaked in bad butter, and thickly strewed over with onions; frijollis, eggs, and a milk pudding followed, and wine and water to drink. In the afternoon chocolate was prepared, and in the evening, about nine o'clock, a supper similar to the dinner, but with less variety of viands. For these accommodations each individual paid a dollar per day. The whole of these messes were prepared under a shed, in a large dirty yard, which served as a kitchen, and was full of filth of all kinds. The knowledge of this, with the sight of the servants, had no tendency to quicken our appetites. The spoons, cups, and knives and forks were of silver, and two lamps hanging from the roof, cased in silver, but quite neglected, betokened a country that had once been rich in metals.

The morning after our arrival we were presented in form to the alcalde. The old man

received us reclined on a mat, and apologized for not rising, as he was unwell. The only furniture in the room was an old bed and two miserable chairs. His wife and daughter made their appearance, with massy gold chains about their necks, and silver crucifixes suspended by them, but there was nothing else in character with this display.

This individual is the only officer of justice: complaints are lodged before him in writing; the offender, if the facts are notorious, is committed to prison, and the papers are referred to the capital. It rarely happens that more is heard of the business, and the incarceration of the poor wretch depends chiefly upon his interest with the *alcalde* or the priest.

The prison is a miserable barn, with a clay floor, to which the prisoners are chained; they are now very few in number, as crimes are rarely punished.

The temperature of this place is excessively hot. The chain of porphyritic mountains which encircle the town, while they give it a very picturesque and beautiful appearance, materially increase the heat, both by impeding the circulation of the air, and by reflecting the rays of the sun. In the month of June, 1827, the thermometer averaged 100° Fahrenheit in the shade. It is far from being healthy, and in the months of September and October the number of deaths is

considerable. Fevers are the chief cause of this mortality. Small pox is rare, as vaccination is generally practised by the medical men, (if such they may be called.) There is not, in fact, a single individual in the place, who has the slightest knowledge of medicine; and if an inhabitant be taken ill, nature has to struggle not only with the disease, but with a bad climate and an ignorant quack; it need not therefore, excite surprise that she often fails.

There do not appear to be any books whatever in the place, excepting a few mass books, and these are little used. The priest, a sottish being, is generally despised, and the church greatly neglected. The inhabitants appear destitute of all religious feeling. A copy of the Scriptures is probably not to be met with in Gualan, nor are they permitted to be sold or distributed without the notes of the church. There is a very considerable degree of intolerance mixed with this neglect of every thing divine. I had with me a number of the "Ocios," (a periodical published by the Spanish emigrants in London,) which contained a paper in favour of religious toleration. I read a part of it aloud, but was immediately stopped with assurances that it could never be thus in America: they evidently disliked the principle. Yet these are republicans!

The men when dressed "a la Inglesa," of which they are very fond, are in manners and appearance the exact prototypes of English ploughmen at a country fair. A few of the women have some degree of softness and polish in their manners, but generally speaking, they are disgusting.

No provision is made for the education of the people, and the children grow up in ignorance, and oftentimes uncontrolled. Soon after the revolution a schoolmaster was sent from Guatemala, but as he could not get paid by the government, and the people had no disposition to do it, the doors of his establishment were soon closed.

The inhabitants of Gualan are composed of agents employed in the transmission of goods to and from Guatemala, Omoa, and Yzabal; mariners who convey them by the river Motagua, in their pitpans; and agriculturalists, (the Indian population,) who grow wheat and maize. There are also two potteries, which employ about twenty men in the manufacture of red tiles for the floors and roofs of the houses, and a few household utensils. The market is held daily in the plaza, but it is very irregularly supplied.

Near the town flows a river of excellent water, in which the inhabitants are constantly bathing. At the bottom of one of these hills is a very fine spring, at which the servants fill their pitchers every

evening for the succeeding day. It is their general rendezvous about seven in the evening; and to watch them winding up the hill, through the orchards which lead to the fountain, each with her red pitcher on her head, and following one another in a continued line, is quite a primitive scene, and by far the most interesting sight in Gualan.

About a mile from the town are two mines, one of gold, the other of silver, which are said to belong to individuals who have not money to work them. Some attempt must however have been made, as they say they are not of the first quality, and it would be long before they could be made to pay. At length we heard of the arrival of our mules, and joyfully prepared to leave a place which possessed so few attractions.

## CHAPTER VII.

*San Pablo,—Ampú,—Simplicity of the Inhabitants,—Chimalapa—Sulphureous Springs,—Entrance into Guatemala.*

LEAVING Gualan and passing through two small Indian villages in the route, we came to San Pablo, a town containing about sixty thatched houses, and a neat church. The road from hence to Ampú is tolerably level, but in many parts unshaded, and in these situations, during the hot months the sun darts his rays with a force that makes it almost impossible to enjoy the scenery.

Passing two other villages and descending a very steep barranca or precipice, we entered a narrow defile between two high hills, which appears to form the bed of a considerable stream in the rainy season, but was now quite dry ; and chiefly excited notice from the immense number of butterflies which swarmed in it, many of them very large in size, and clothed in every diversity of colour. No inconsiderable number of the 760 kinds which Linnæus has reckoned up, might



have been collected in this spot. The hills on each side are thickly wooded, and to these on our approach they rapidly winged their flight.

From hence passing over a small chain of hills nearly devoid of vegetation, and composed entirely of calcareous earths, we arrived at the little village of Ampú, where for the first time, we observed lands enclosed by hedge rows, and cattle grazing under the eye of their owners.

This place does not lie in the regular route from Gualan to the capital, and is consequently rarely visited by strangers. The whole of the inhabitants soon appeared at the house where we had stopped, the news of the arrival of an "Ingles" and his "Señora," having rapidly spread throughout the neighbourhood. Though exceedingly inquisitive, examining the dress of the lady with the greatest attention, they were very respectful and polite. From my having a few medicines, they at once concluded I was a physician, or "gran medico," and several came to complain of their infirmities. One had rheumatism, another calentura or fever, a third colic. To all of these very simple remedies were offered, and we were loaded with thanks. Towards evening we took tea, and amused ourselves by letting them taste it, which some of them did with strange contortions; while others, with a courtier-like politeness declared it to be "muy bueno," very good, at the same time

secretly stepping towards the door, in order to empty their mouths of it unobserved. Many of these people had never passed the bounds of their native village, and knew as little of the tumultuous world, as the world knows of them.

From hence the following morning, we started for Chimalapa, across dry and arid plains of considerable extent, bearing scarcely any signs of vegetation. A few leafless trees and shrubs were scattered over them, high and sterile mountains rising one above another, enclosed them on every side, while the reflection of the sun's rays on the sandy soil, rendered the heat almost intolerable. After riding onward over these plains, for about six leagues, we passed two small Indian settlements, where the soil appeared better in quality, was a little cultivated, and in some places enclosed.

Towards evening, we arrived at Chimalapa, a town containing about 500 inhabitants, several good houses, and a neat church. The population is entirely Indian, and altogether uninstructed. During the night the thunders echoed over the neighbouring mountains, which were brilliantly illuminated by numerous and vivid flashes of lightning, accompanied by heavy rains; the first that had fallen here for several months.

Our following day's journey was very uninteresting. With the exception of a few pines, some maguey and cactus plants, the face of the

country is sterile, and appears almost entirely uninhabited. One Indian settlement, where we remained for an hour or two, in the heat of the day, was cleaner, more compact, and had a greater air of comfort about it, than any we had yet seen. About four leagues from this little spot runs a range of high mountains chiefly composed of porphyry, which it is no easy task to ascend after a long day's journey. Once accomplished however, the traveller is abundantly repaid. From this elevation the country again becomes level, and he suddenly finds himself transported into a fresher and cooler climate. The difference of temperature is truly surprising. After being oppressed with heat, we found ourselves at once chilly, and when we arrived at Guastatoya, a village situated about a league from the summit, wet with the rain, which had for some time been falling in torrents, we should have rejoiced at the opportunity of surrounding a blazing fire.

This village is one of the most interesting in the whole journey. Its elevated situation and beautiful scenery, rendered still more agreeable by the refreshing rains that had so lately fallen, pleased us exceedingly, and we could willingly have remained here some days, had our time permitted it. The house we inhabited was one of the best in the place, and was at that time

tenanted by an old widow lady and her two daughters. The chairs, doors, and two old fashioned couches, were all of mahogany antiques carved; three niches in the wall of the largest room contained images of saints, and a large crucifix, while in an inner apartment, an old four-post mahogany bedstead, with a few better articles of furniture indicated some degree of superiority in the owner. It had probably been the residence of a priest in former days, having every appearance of a decayed parsonage. The yard was well stocked with fowls, turkeys, and good milch cows; and under a shed was a loom on which one of the women was weaving coarse cotton.

The ride from this place to Omoyta, the next village, is very agreeable; the first four leagues of the way lies through cultivated fields, chiefly of maize, and watered by the river Platanos, which flows in this direction so circuitously as to oblige the traveller to ford it ten times in the course of a few hours. In some places this stream is four or five feet deep, and has a rapid current, but generally it merits rather the name of a rivulet. In the rainy season however, it augments so much, as to render it necessary, in several places, to have ferry boats, while in others, the post from Gualan to Guatemala is not unfrequently detained several days, owing to the sudden swelling of the waters. The latter four

leagues are shaded by the woods, through which the road is cut; in many places these are open, and partake greatly of the character of park scenery.

At Omoyta we were received into the house of the Padre, at that time inhabited only by his nephew and niece, the former of whom, a man about thirty, lay ill of a fever he had contracted on the coast. We found him lying on the floor of one of the rooms, with every door and window carefully closed, smoking a cigar. In this room he had remained shut up fourteen days, using no other means of recovery, and impressed with the idea that fresh air and cleanliness would be injurious to the last degree. This we found afterwards to be the general opinion, and that the plan he had pursued was the regular course of treatment in fevers. With some difficulty we persuaded him to allow the windows to be opened, that he might see the light of heaven, and breathe an untainted atmosphere. We then gave him a few simple medicines, but as we left early in the morning, we heard nothing more of our patient.

This house, which stood by itself on the hill, overlooking the Indian village at its foot, was considerably decayed, and greatly neglected. Adjoining to it was a neat chapel, or "Oratorio de la Misa," which they willingly showed us. It contained one tolerable painting of the taking

down from the cross, and several images, but was, in other respects, very plain. Here the villagers assemble to say mass, every feast day. A small bell raised above the building, serves to call them together out of the valley, and were it to join in simple and spiritual worship, it would yield in such solitudes as these, one of the most interesting and delightful of sounds.

From Omoyta to San José the country is for the most part sterile, and the scenery uninteresting. After passing one or two considerable barrancas, the road suddenly turns by a beautiful little spot, cultivated with the sugar cane. A good house, belonging to the proprietor, and a trapiché or sugar mill, surrounded by a luxuriant plantation, and well watered by a stream, running through the grounds, appeared a little paradise in the midst of these wilds.

About three leagues further, the country becomes exceedingly mountainous, and the roads very rugged. Several of these mountains are supposed to contain rich veins of silver, but they have never been worked, and from their locality, the attempt would be difficult and expensive. A little beyond these flow two considerable streams powerfully sulphureous; one hot, the other cold: near the source of the former the temperature of the water is boiling heat.

From hence at the distance of about a league, is the village of San José. The spot on which it stands has many natural advantages, but the houses are wretchedly built, and the accommodations miserable.

Leaving San José, the road to Guatemala lies for several leagues, over a narrow and elevated plain. On each side are deep valleys thickly wooded, chiefly with pine and evergreen oaks, and behind these rise undulating lines of hills, backed by high mountains. As we approach nearer the city, the eye opens on an extensive plain studded with trees, and ornamented by numerous hedge rows, enclosing the lands near the capital. In the midst of the plain stands the city of New Guatemala.

Its appearance from this spot about a league distant, is singularly picturesque. Its numerous turrets and cupolas, glistening in the sun, and its white low houses regularly arranged at right angles, with orange trees, thickly interspersed among the buildings, form a middle ground, while the mountains encircling it, and especially the beautiful "Volcano de Agua," as it is termed, generally crowned by clouds, complete a picture, which, for interest and beauty, will bear comparison with any prospect in the world.

The descent from this elevated situation into the valley is by a road cut out of the rock, and wind-

ing down it. On one side are deep precipices, and on the other high and perpendicular rocks, each clothed with hanging woods, and the richest verdure.

At the end of this pass stands the eastern gate, where our passports were required. Between this and the outer street of the city, are orchards and meadows for about two miles, and after these a few straggling houses, till we gradually enter the more populated districts. When we arrived, the place appeared almost deserted: the streets were as silent as if the plague had ravaged them, and most of the houses were closed. This we found afterwards to be partly owing to our having entered at the hour of siesta, and partly to the civil war, then at its height. The opposing party had a short time before assaulted the city, and the inhabitants were still in a state of confusion. After riding through ten or a dozen streets, all equally silent, and some of them covered with grass, we arrived safely at the place of our destination.



## PART II.

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THE CITY,—ITS MANNERS, CUSTOMS, &C.—POPULATION,—POLICE,—MORAL AND RELIGIOUS STATE, &C. &C.

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### CHAPTER I.

*Former Sites of the City,—Its present situation and advantages,—Public Buildings,—Streets,—Houses, &c.*

BEFORE entering upon a description of the city, as it now exists, it will be advisable to give a short sketch of the different situations which it has occupied, and the circumstances that have produced its frequent removal.

From Juarros\* we learn, that soon after the conquest of the country by Pedro Alvarado, he and his followers began to look out for a suitable spot on which they might found a capital for the newly conquered kingdom. “Taking their route

\* Statistical History of the Kingdom of Guatemala, by Don Domingo Juarros. Translated by J. Baily, Lieut. R. N. 8vo. London, 1823.

by the villages on the coast, and overcoming whatever force attempted to dispute their passage, they arrived at the base of the "Volcan de Agua." This situation, says Remesal, (lib. i. ch. ii.,) pleased the Spaniards so much by its fine climate, the beauty of the meadows, delightfully watered by running streams, and particularly from lying between two lofty mountains, from one of which descended rivulets of water in every direction, and from the summit of the other issued volumes of smoke and fire, altogether rendering the place remarkable for its locality, that here they determined to establish themselves, and on this spot (about ten leagues from the present city) they founded the capital, on the 4th of November, 1527. Mass was said by Juan Godinez, chaplain to the army, and the feasts and military rejoicings lasted for three days.

This continued to be the principal town till the year 1541, when it was entirely ruined by the inundation of a dreadful torrent of water from the mountain, which, sweeping before it immense masses of rock, overwhelmed many of the buildings, and deeply injured the rest. Many of the inhabitants perished in the ruins, and amongst the rest the widow of Alvarado. After this calamity the principal survivors met together, and resolved unanimously to remove the capital about a league further, where it would be better pro-

tected from further inundations by the neighbouring hills. Here they founded the city called Old Guatemala or La Antigua, on the 22d of October, in the same year, and immediately proceeded to erect convents, hospitals, churches, an university, and other public buildings.

Favoured by innumerable local advantages, the new metropolis rapidly grew in importance, and promised to compete, if not in size, at least in beauty, with the most distinguished cities of the new continent. But notwithstanding all its natural advantages, it was doomed to share a similar fate to its predecessor. Between the date of its foundation and the year 1773, when it was finally abandoned as the capital, it suffered dreadfully from the calamity of earthquakes. Nine different times during this period was it in greater or less measure, overthrown, and as often rebuilt or repaired, until at length, after the shock of the year 1773, which left one part of the city in ruins, and severely injured the rest, "the inhabitants, wearied with rebuilding, resolved for the third time to remove their situation further from the volcanoes, the prolific source of all their miseries," and after many examinations, at length fixed upon a part of the Valley of Mixco, ten leagues removed from them, where, by virtue of a royal decree, they founded in 1776 the third metropolis.

To this situation removed in succession the university, parishes, convents, and churches, as their different buildings were completed. "Many of the artizans and a great part of the people still wished to remain in their old abodes, "but in the month of June, 1779, the governor issued a proclamation, (certainly a tyrannical one,) commanding that every inhabitant should quit the city within a prescribed number of days, and that from the date of the proclamation "no artificer should there exercise his trade, without being liable to very severe penalties." In compliance with these positive orders, "the city from being the busy haunt of men, was at once transformed into a dreary solitude." It remained in this state for some time, until at length many of its former occupants covertly resumed their abodes, and it has by degrees, again become peopled, though far inferior both in size, population, and wealth, to New Guatemala.

This city as the present capital of the republic of the United Provinces, merits a more minute description. It is situated in the midst of the plain of La Virgen, which is five leagues in diameter, and forms part of the Valley of Mixco, one of the nine smaller valleys, which constitute what is termed the great Vale of Guatemala or Pasuya. It lies in 14° 37" N. latitude, and

90° 30' W. longitude,\* and is 90 leagues from the Atlantic, 26 from the Pacific, and 400 from the city of Mexico.

The valley is watered by several streams and lakes, which conduce to its fertility, and the city is surrounded by numerous small villages, which regularly supply its markets with the various fruits and vegetables of the country. In point of situation it is certainly inferior to the old city. The scenery is not so romantic, nor are the lands immediately adjoining so well cultivated, yet still it is rich enough in natural beauties to bear in this respect, comparison with almost any other city in the world.

Owing to the style in which the houses are built, it occupies a very considerable portion of ground, and appears to an European eye, when viewed from a little distance, much more populous and extensive than it really is. It contains about sixty manzanas or squares of houses, formed by the intersection of streets at right angles, which vary in extent from 150 to 350 yards in front, and these are arranged so as to form one large square. On each side of the city, as the suburbs have increased, other houses have been erected without much regard to uniformity.

\* Juarros states the latitude and longitude to be 14° 40' N. latitude, and 91° 46' W. longitude, but the author has reason to believe, that those he has given on the authority of Mr. Kirkwood, will be found to approximate nearer to the true position.

The streets are mostly broad, but wretchedly paved, with a considerable declivity on each side, which forms a gutter in the middle, so that while after a heavy shower of rain, they are almost impassable from the sudden stream of water, at other times the sharp pointed and ill arranged pebbles extort groans from the unhappy sufferer, who, in light shoes, is doomed to undergo the miserable penance of passing over them.

In walking through the city, the first thought that strikes a stranger is, that Guatemala is one of the dullest places he has ever entered. This melancholy appearance is chiefly occasioned by the way in which the houses are built. Consisting of only one story, and occupying a great deal of ground, they present to the street only a series of white washed walls and red tiled roofs, with here and there a window, carefully guarded by large bars of iron, and a pair of massy folding doors, studded on the outside with heavy nails, thus giving to it, at the best of times, more the appearance of a deserted than an inhabited city.

The plaza or market-place is a square of about 150 yards each way, with a fountain in the middle, and besides the daily market, is occupied by numerous temporary shops or stalls, and surrounded by buildings, offices, and shops. Projecting piazzas form a covered walk on three

sides, under which trifling articles are exposed for sale. The public buildings are numerous, and consist of an university, five convents, four nunneries, a cathedral, four parish churches, and fifteen other churches or chapels of minor importance; besides a treasury, mint, and other government offices. Most of these are in a good style of architecture, and some of them judiciously decorated. In comparison with the churches of Puebla and Mexico they may possess few attractions, but remembering the circumstances under which they were built, they do credit both to the zeal and taste of those who superintended their erection.

Most of the images of the saints, termed by Juarros "beautiful statues," are very common pieces of sculpture, and disfigured by absurd and vulgar dresses, while many of the paintings which he says are "by the best masters" are only very ordinary copies. The utensils of gold and silver are splendid, and among other ornaments, the church of St. Domingo has a statue of the Virgin del Rosario, nearly six feet high, of massy silver.

The history of the university is not very interesting. The first lectures were delivered in the old city, about 1620, and a rector, students, and collegial form of discipline were regularly appointed in 1678. Lectures were delivered accord-

ing to the old scholastic method until 1778, when the first course of experimental philosophy was begun. Juarros speaks of examinations in surgery, of a royal cabinet of natural history, of schools of mathematics, and a college of physicians. All these things *may* have existed, but in the present day they are unknown. The examinations have ceased, the cabinet is without specimens, and the college of physicians, and the schools of mathematics alike destitute of students and professors.

The vanity which prompted Juarros to speak of these institutions in the way he has done, seems to be a national vice. Similar instances are occurring every day, especially in the speeches of the public authorities, and in the statements of the weekly papers. A stranger looking through the latter, would receive the impression that a military college, a national bank, and Lancasterian schools were long ago established in the republic, but on inquiry he will find that, although each of these has been proposed in the assembly, reported upon and agreed to, not one of them has ever been commenced.

In connexion with the university, there are twelve professorships, and an academical senate of fifty doctors. It is needless to enumerate the chairs. They are of Latin, philosophy, theology, morals. &c. What the precise mode of impart-



ing instruction may be, matters little. It is sufficient to know that the students generally leave the college with similar acquirements to those Gil Blas possessed when he departed from the university of Salamanca. The chief of the state in his speeches to the assembly, has several times alluded to the necessity of a change in the plan of study, but hitherto it has remained unaltered.

There is besides an academy of drawing, which has now about nine or ten students, and merits notice as being the only memorial of a society which was formed in the year 1795, called the Economical Society of Friends of the Kingdom, for the diffusion and encouragement of Literature and Science. Its labours were suspended by an arbitrary decree of the court of Madrid, in 1799.

The public offices of government are conveniently arranged, but as edifices possess no peculiarities. The three hospitals which are described by Juarros as existing in the old city, are now comprised in one, called St. Juan de Dios, which consists of four cuadros or squares, around which are the different wards for the sick. The rooms are high, and tolerably clean, but not well ventilated. It is calculated to hold 300, but at the time I visited it, had not more than 200 occupants, mostly wounded in drunken quarrels, of whom about a fourth were females. This insti-

tution is supported chiefly by a tax upon flour, which produces annually about 16,000 dollars. Before the revolution ten dollars daily were paid to it from the royal treasury, but this has of course, now ceased. It is also occasionally assisted by charitable contributions.

But that which chiefly distinguishes Guatemala from the other cities of the New World is, its numerous and beautiful aqueducts and pilas for the regular distribution of water all over the metropolis. From a fine spring, which rises in the mountains, at about one league and a half S. E. of the city, the stream is conducted by means of pipes into no less than twelve public reservoirs, from which it is again carried into every private house, regularly supplying, sometimes one, and oftentimes two or more pilas or stone baths with excellent water. This aqueduct must have cost an immensity of labour to complete, being brought in some places, over valleys, upon ranges of arches, and in others, carried under ground by means of tunnels.

The public fountains and reservoirs are many of them of very superior workmanship, and ornament the streets in which they are placed. Most of these have rows of troughs connected with them, in which those of the lower classes who have not water in their houses wash their linen. It is amusing to see sometimes thirty or forty

women busily employed in this manner, and most industriously rubbing the piece of cloth they wish to clean, against a stone, a plan which is universally pursued, although manifestly to the speedy destruction of the article undergoing the operation. But like many other good housewives, the Guatimalian ladies have their prejudices, and will not be persuaded that hot water is preferable to cold, and would remove the necessity of such rough treatment.

The houses of the respectable citizens are well built, and commodiously arranged. A description of one will give an idea of the rest. Let us enter then at that great folding door, looking like an inn gate, with blank walls on each side. We open it, and immediately find ourselves in a large square court-yard, in the middle of which is an orange-tree in full bloom. All around it is a covered walk or piazza, raised about a foot from the ground, the roof supported by wooden pillars. Under this piazza are seven or eight doors, leading into different apartments, each one having an interior communication with the rest, and all of course on the ground floor, stairs being almost unknown in Guatemala. The first room will probably be a common chamber, the next a sala or drawing-room, furnished with ten or a dozen antique chairs, an old fashioned settee, with a slip of mat before it for a carpet, and two small

dressing tables, placed at an immense distance from one another, each holding the image of a saint carefully enclosed in glass. Three or four pictures will adorn the clean white-washed walls, and two lamps, cased in silver, will be hanging from a roof in which all the naked beams are to be seen, with here and there a straggling cobweb. The floor, like that of all the rest of the rooms, will be paved with red tiles, its cleanliness depending upon the civilization of its owner.

From hence we pass into a third apartment, probably the chief bed chamber, serving also for a daily sitting room, in which to receive visitors. It will contain a handsome bed, a large mahogany wardrobe, a few chairs, and a cupboard with glass doors, in which may be seen carefully arranged all the stock of china, from the blue wash-hand basin down to the diminutive coffee cup, till lately a more valuable property than a similar service of silver. By the side of the bed will hang an image of the Saviour on the cross, under a little scarlet canopy, and on a small table in another corner, will be placed St. Joseph or the Virgin. The two next rooms will have little furniture besides a bed, a chair, and an image. We shall therefore pass on into the comedor or dining room, which will contain only one large oak table, (a fixture;) and seven or eight common wooden chairs. Next to this will be the cocina :

in one corner a large baking oven of an oval shape, and in the middle of the room a mass of solid brickwork, three or four feet high, containing six or seven cavities for small charcoal fires, and conveniences for preparing the thousand different stews which are compounded in a Spanish kitchen. To the right of this will be an inner yard with its pila or cistern of water, and further on the stables, with a second for the use of the cattle. The remaining apartments will be occupied according to the property or family of the owner, and this is a fair description of a respectable house, letting for a rent equal to about £80 a year, English money, in the city of New Guatemala.

## CHAPTER II.

*Customs and Manners,—Tobacco,—Morning Calls,—Occupations of a Domestic Man,—Scenes in the Plaza,—Evening Parties,—Gambling,—Superstitions,—Marriages and Funerals,—Almoneda or Auction.*

AMONG the various occupations which employ the time and attention of a traveller in a foreign land, few are more amusing, and if properly exercised, are capable of being made more instructive, than to observe the variety of customs which that imperious tyrant, general usage, has imposed upon its inhabitants. We are generally too apt to exult in the thought of our own superior civilization, and while we smile sometimes contemptuously at what we deem the absurdities of other nations, forget that we ourselves are no less under similar bondage, and act oftentimes in a way equally opposed to unsophisticated nature.

Still there are fashions in Guatemala which it would require more than common charity to speak of with respect, and among these stands

foremost the immoderate use of tobacco by both sexes. In private or in public—alone or in society, the Guatimalian must have his cigar, and the lady her cigarrito.\* His proudest accomplishment is to strike a light with his pocket match, neatly cased in silver, and present his lighted cigar to her genteely, and she in return, permits him to spit in every corner of her room, without molestation. A gentleman consumes daily from fifteen to twenty *puros*, and a lady of moderate pretensions to celebrity, fifty *cigarritos*. Here far from being “destructive of society’s chief joys,” the “pernicious weed” gives a zest to every conversation, and supplies all those vacuums which, in English society, are filled up by gazing on the carpet. No business can be transacted, no bargain made, without exchanging the cigar, and both in the streets and public places of amusement, the ladies are to be seen smoking as composedly as in their own houses.

A history of the occupations of a domestic man during one day, will lay open in great measure the habits of the more respectable families.—At six he rises, and if it be one of their numerous feast days, accompanies his wife to mass, at which rich and poor, masters and servants indiscriminately

\* A diminutive cigar, made by rolling a small portion of tobacco in the leaf of maize; ten of these are esteemed equal to a common cigar, called for the sake of distinction, *puros*.

kneel without distinction of rank or place. Returning about seven they take chocolate, which answers to our breakfast, with this exception that it is not made a social meal. Each one enters the comedor at the hour most agreeable to himself, and is then supplied with his cup of chocolate made very thick and sweet, which with a small loaf of bread, an egg, a little fried meat and a glass of clear spring water serves him till dinner.

At this hour during the warmer months, the habit of bathing, for which the houses afford so many conveniences, is very general, but in any other way the inhabitants appear to have the greatest aversion to the application of water. For weeks together the most respectable inhabitants never wash their hands, faces or teeth, and the slightest sickness serves as a pretext for delaying the operation as well as that of shaving, frequently for months; so that you have only to look at a gentleman's beard to know how long he has had a cold, or to a lady's face to discover when she last fancied herself indisposed.

From ten to twelve are the usual hours for morning calls and receiving visits. These possess in general the same characteristics as in other parts of the world. Friends meet as lovingly, talk as scandalously, hate each other as cordially and lie as gracefully here, as in the most polished cities of civilized Europe. The only points of



difference are, that the ladies shout out their observations in the highest note of the gamut, becloud each other's beauties with the fumes of tobacco, and part with an embrace as cordial as the majority of modern English kisses. These parties generally meet in the lady's bedroom, the gentlemen dressed "a la Inglesa" with coats cut any thing but anatomically, and the ladies in black silk, with lace mantilla for the head, splendidly worked silk stockings, and shoes almost diminutive enough for the Empress of China. Modesty and prudery are here understood to be synonymous, and subjects are freely discussed in mixed parties to which common delicacy would seem to forbid the slightest allusion.

At one they dine on soup, rice, vegetables and meat of various kinds cooked in as many different ways, with dulces or sweetmeats for a dessert, of which about 200 different sorts are prepared. Fish frequently appears towards the close of the meal, and fruit is introduced before the cloth is drawn. Scarcely any wine is drank. In many of the most respectable families it does not even make its appearance on the table. The whole concludes with a recitation, miscalled a thanksgiving. Well-bred people in Guatemala, like well-bred people in England, naturally feel that any thing like serious thanks to their Maker would subject them to the charge of fanaticism, and

therefore arrange matters so that this service is merely understood to say that dinner is concluded.

From the comedor each individual adjourns to his bedroom to take the siesta and digest his dinner. So universal is the practice that from two to three the streets are deserted. Old and young, masters and servants, are alike reclining on beds and sofas. The very domestic animals at this hour are to be seen stretching themselves in the sun, and, partaking of the infection, "join the general troop of sleep." Between three and four things begin to revive, and first one and then another, yawning, rubs his eyes, and strolls to the clock to see how time has passed during his slumbers. Towards four the comedor again becomes frequented for chocolate, after which the occupations of the day are once more resumed.

Let us then take a walk into the street and see what is passing there. The daily market is about over, and contains only a few stragglers buying at a cheaper rate the refuse of the day's sales; ten or a dozen half naked Indians are basking in the sun; three or four soldiers are reclining against the pillars of the piazzas, humming a revolutionary air; and a little further on are two or three devoted Catholics most devoutly kneeling before the image of a saint, and apparently in a state of the most perfect abstraction. In a little while the tinkling of a bell is heard, notifying the

approach of the Viaticum. Instantly high and low, poor and rich, are on their knees; till as its feeble sound dies in the distance, one by one they rise and pursue their way.

The costume of the street varies little from that of the house. The ladies, who in a morning are to be seen only in black, now parade the streets in dashing silk gowns, and without any covering for the head, while the fashionable beaux lounge by their sides in printed cotton jackets and Spanish cloaks, with one end carelessly thrown over the right shoulder. The shops, although generally well supplied with goods, possess no attractions. All are without windows, and nothing is displayed; the open doorway being half covered with cloth to keep out the sun.

Returning to our temporary home as the evening sets in, we find the gentlemen just come back from an excursion to the suburbs, on their pacing mules or horses; each rider seated on a saddle rising three or four inches before and behind, and armed with an enormous pair of silver spurs. Before the saddle is a large skin of some shaggy coated animal, hanging down to the heavy Spanish box stirrup, or still heavier and indescribable one of iron, over which lies the long taper end of the bridle, made of narrow slips of hide twisted into a cord, and so long as to serve the

purposes of a whip. To this is affixed an enormous bit, under which the poor beast writhes and is effectually subdued.

By about seven o'clock the last gleam of twilight has disappeared, and the servants enter with the lights, reciting most devoutly the "**Bendito**," which may be thus translated, "**Blessed and praised be the holy sacrament of the altar for ever and ever.**". In another hour the sala has assumed its evening character. Cloaks and swords occupy the corner of the room—a small table at the further end is surrounded by a party busily employed at "**monte**," (a game of cards,) amidst clouds of smoke,—and at the other end some lady, regardless of the noisy tongues of the gamblers, is playing a popular air upon a wretched marimba, or still worse piano, accompanying it with her voice. The miserable light yielded by two thin, long-wicked tallow candles, in massy silver candlesticks, throws a gloom over the apartment, strangely in contrast with the light-hearted gaiety of its occupants. Formal parties are rare; friends drop in towards the evening without ceremony, amuse themselves for an hour or two, and retire generally without taking any kind of refreshment.

In some respects a strong parallel might be drawn between the domestic manners of the old families here, and those of country towns in Eng-

land, about a century ago. The uncarpeted floor, the heavy clumsy furniture, the well supplied wardrobe, the stock of china, carefully exhibited, are all characteristics of those days; while the rigid habits of economy, the unbounded hospitality to strangers, unaccompanied by any thing like splendid or showy entertainments, and especially the great degree of familiarity which subsists between mistress and servants, all concur in exhibiting that less refined and simpler state of society which existed in such places at the period referred to.

In some respects however, they have made sufficient advancement, especially in the art of gambling. Their favourite game, "monte," appears to have little attraction, besides the facilities it affords for the indulgence of this detestable vice. In families, the farthest removed from what is termed by them high players, I have seen ten and twelve pounds sterling, lost and gained by individuals, in a few hours.

In insincerity also, they are by no means behind their European brethren, since there is not probably a country in the world where words and feelings have less connexion. Mortal enemies, even where their enmity is notorious to all the world, will meet and embrace after the customs of the country, with every external appearance of intimate friendship. By this procedure nobody

is deceived. It seems to be an understood regulation, that whatever may be the workings within, nothing shall disturb the serenity of the surface, so that even in time of civil war, when factions and party spirit are at their height, and the deepest hatreds are cherished, the external quiet of society remains unmolested. Were this all it might be tolerated; but the moral effects of systematic deception, are too melancholy to make one wish to see tranquillity purchased at so high a price.

About ten o'clock the different members of the family sit down to a supper, differing little from the dinner, eat heartily of its various dishes, and with stomachs loaded to a degree that would make most people tremble for fear of apoplexy, retire to bed, and in half an hour are all soundly asleep. In the more religious families recitations of about a quarter of an hour in length, and mostly to the Virgin, are practised on those evenings when there are no visitors.

The superstitious and intolerant feelings of an uneducated population are lamentably visible among the lower orders. As the archbishop passes in his carriage through the streets, the poor Indians are to be seen on either side most devoutly kneeling, and so ignorant are they of the object to which they bow, that they repeat the ceremony not only when the empty carriage

rolls by, but oftentimes when some other of the few clumsy vehicles kept by the wealthier inhabitants rumble along the pavement. Of this our own experience furnished an amusing, or I ought rather to say, melancholy proof. In this instance they bent the knee quite as devoutly to a coach full of obstinate heretics, as they could have done to the pseudo successor of St. Peter himself.

Strangers or heretics, for the words with them are synonymous, seldom receive so courteous a reception, especially the ladies, who, by their dress, are more easily recognized as foreigners. At them, or rather their bonnets, stones and dirt are not unfrequently thrown, accompanied by the elegant word "*cochinas*," which, being translated, signifies that respectable community, the swine.

Even the better educated are slaves to the superstitions of the church of Rome. To images of saints and to church doors every passer by takes off the hat, and at ten in the morning when the bell tolls to announce the raising of the host in the cathedral, the streets and shops, salas and kitchens, are alike filled with devout kneelers.

The etiquette connected with visiting the archbishop partakes a little of the same character. As the visitor enters, the archbishop rises to meet him, and presents his finger, on which is a valuable diamond ring called "*La Esposa*" the bride, sig-

nifying the church. This is humbly kissed by the kneeling visitant and the ceremony is renewed every time.

On his saint day crowds of beggars surround his gate for alms, and willingly afford him the opportunity to perform works of charity, numerous enough if number would suffice to merit heaven. This tribe, mostly composed of the very worst part of the population, thrive and flourish on this propitious soil. Every individual has his saint day, on which besides receiving the congratulatory visits of his acquaintance, and the trifling presents of his more intimate friends, he feels himself particularly bound to assist every drunken vagabond who appears at his gate to solicit alms. At other times one day in the week is set apart for this service, and a certain number of pensioners receive their weekly pay.

Marrying and giving in marriage here, as in other countries, is distinguished by peculiar customs. When the consent of parents has been obtained, if the lover have no previous establishment he takes a house, and the parents of the lady place in it at their own expense a handsome bed and plentiful supply of household linen. This having been done, the intended bridegroom, on the day previous to the celebration of the nuptials, sends to his future wife, dresses, jewels and ornaments in proportion to his wealth. The ceremony is



generally performed before day light on the following morning, and all attendant expenses are paid by the parents of the bride. The newly married couple then adjourn to the house of the lady's father, where they reside for fifteen or twenty days.

The other rites of the church are conducted in the same way as in other Catholic countries. Funerals are very expensive, owing not only to the number of individuals who take part in the ceremony, but also to the splendid dresses in which bodies are interred. The wealthy throw away considerable sums in the indulgence of this foolish vanity, and not unfrequently expend a sum equal to £50 sterling upon the interment of a new born infant.

The most splendid funeral I witnessed in Guatimala, was that of a rich Canonigo. The friars of the different convents, two by two, led the procession, one bearing a massy silver cross, and the others lighted wax candles, the canonigos and the doctors following in their robes. After the bier walked the priests and curas two by two, the chief of the state, the friends of the late canon, and the principal military officers. Between the house of the deceased and the place of interment, a distance of about 500 yards, were arranged at equal distances in the street, four large tables covered with black cloth, and holding six im-

mense wax candles in massy silver candlesticks. On each of these the body, extended upon a splendid bier and clothed in the richest robes was placed. The procession formed around it, a mass was sung, and holy water thrown upon the body by one of the doctors, after which the whole moved on to the next resting place, where the same formalities were observed. On its arrival at the cathedral the body was placed in the middle aisle, the members of the procession ranged themselves on either side, with their lighted tapers,—crowds of spectators knelt in front, and other crowds stood in silence behind, as with one consent every voice began to sing the solemn mass. This imposing ceremony lasted for some hours, after which the corpse was deposited in one of the vaults below the cathedral.

The lower orders generally bury in the “Santo Campo,” or consecrated ground behind the cathedral, where many simple memorials to the dead have been erected. After the funeral an “almoneda,” something like an auction, takes place of the goods of the deceased. The various articles of furniture are arranged in the room, and ticketed with a small paper, on which is written the lowest number of dollars for which the article can be disposed of. An Indian is then placed at the window near the street proclaiming with a loud voice the almoneda within. The public then

enter to view the goods, and any one choosing an article at the affixed price is permitted to take it after it has been publicly exposed to the offers of a higher bidder. If after three days any of the articles remain unsold, they are re-ticketed at two-thirds of the former price.

Among the curious collections which are thus exhibited to the public eye, are to be found numbers of wretched pictures, statues of saints, devotional books, relics, and antique domestic articles of solid silver, carrying the spectator back in imagination to the time when the commonest utensils of a tradesman's house were composed of this precious metal. Such was literally the case only thirty years ago; while at the present moment so great is its scarcity, that a bankrupt and tottering government plunged in civil war, is vainly attempting to establish by the most despotic measures, a paper currency.

### CHAPTER III.

*Population,—Its Characteristics,—Public Morals,—Police,—Political Offences,—Prison,—Lawsuits,—Education,—Schools, &c.*

THE population of the city, according to a census taken in the year 1795, consisted of 24,434 persons; but as a considerable increase has taken place since that time, it may be fairly estimated at 35,000, including European Spaniards, white Creoles, Mulattoes and Indians. The offspring of negroes and Indians, of whites and Indians, as well as the descendants of African negroes, are included under the term mulattoes, by which they are generally known; sometimes, however, they are called mestizoes, or ladinos.

Each of these classes possess not only distinct, but widely different characteristics. The Europeans, proud of their Castilian blood, look with the most ineffable contempt upon the natives, whom they consider their inferiors, both in knowledge, industry, and in the exercise of the domestic virtues. The Americans, frankly acknowledging themselves deficient in information,

and especially in knowledge of the world, bitterly accuse the Spanish nation as the cause of their misfortunes, and console themselves with the imaginary possession of a "viveza," or aptitude, which, properly cultivated, would have produced master-spirits, capable of wielding with credit the rod of empire in the new world. The Europeans, chiefly composed of men, who, in their younger days have left the mother country, and by dint of honourable exertion, have arrived at the possession of wealth, are distinguished by habits of economy, caution and prudence in their engagements. The leading Americans, descendants of the Spaniards, who, at an earlier period, acquired extensive fortunes by the monopolies they enjoyed, and the despotism they exercised, have been brought up in those habits of indolence which seem inseparable from the climate, are dilatory and negligent in business, and too frequently dissipate their mental ennui at the gaming-table. Under the influence of these degrading habits, they frequently descend to little meannesses, from which national pride defends the Spanish merchant; are doomed to see obscure Europeans acquiring wealth as rapidly as they are losing it, and find themselves in the possession of power and influence, without that steadiness of character, or those habits of business,

which might in some measure, have supplied the deficiency of education and native talent.

But here it should be remarked, that the Americans themselves are divided into two parties, differing as widely both in feeling and sentiment. The *liberals*, composed of the few individuals who have carefully gathered up some of the scattered rays of knowledge, which, in spite of the vigilance of Spain, have for some years penetrated into the heart of the new continent, are possessed of a higher degree of intellect, and a greater energy, than the moderate party; but unhappily, in casting off the slavish yoke of Rome, and effecting their mental independence, they have imbibed the worst doctrines of the French revolutionary school, and strikingly exhibit in the fury of their hatred, the unhappy principles which prevailed at that melancholy period of European history. The *serviles*, consisting of the most influential families, who, before the revolution, arrogated to themselves the title of *noblesse*, and ruled the country with a despotic hand, through the medium of the viceroys, whom they caressed and flattered, now fill the different offices of government, act upon Spanish principles, are hated and despised by all parties, yet maintain their posts through the influence of the church and the resident Spaniards, who support

their measures from fear of the excesses of the liberals. These with the Europeans, from a dislike to every change, and a feverish dread of innovation, steadily oppose whatever tends to lessen the influence of the Romish church, or to introduce a liberal system of commercial policy. The liberals on the other hand, abruptly freed from a thralldom which they had borne for ages, and in some of the provinces suddenly advanced to power and place, seize on every new thing with avidity, plunge into schemes of which they understand nothing, and in their zeal to overthrow all existing institutions, forget to separate the good from the bad, the wheat from the tares. The latter are as incautious as the former are fearful. The one holds wretched theories, but lessens the evil by mild and moderate practice. The other disgraces better principles, by a miserable exemplification of them. In politics the one is ultra republican, the other, ultra aristocratical. In religion the former inclines to superstition; the latter to scepticism. To foreigners both parties are courteous and obliging, and never suffer local prejudices to interfere with the rites of hospitality.

Into these two classes the white population may be pretty equally divided. Difference of sentiment and of character, both mental and moral, unite in making them determined enemies, and

their clashing opinions, feelings, and interests, have, as might naturally have been expected, involved the country in all the horrors of a civil war,

This confusion of elements gives to Guatemala a character of its own, differing considerably from that of the sister republics. Liberated from the yoke of Spain, not less by uncontrollable circumstances, than by the force of moral feeling; it achieved its independence without an effort, and silently exchanged the rule of a despotic monarch, for the factious struggles of opposing parties. Each has appealed to arms, excited the passions, and called out the energies of a dangerous ally in the coloured population. Happy will it be for the disputants on either side, if these dissensions shall have subsided, before this third party, powerful enough to extirpate both, wash out their differences in mingled blood!

Nor are such apprehensions altogether without foundation. The Mulatto, or mixed race, form in point of fact, the physical force of the nation. To a considerable degree of cunning, they unite an energy to which the simple Indian is altogether a stranger, are less subject to the restraints of a superstitious creed, and more abandoned to the grosser vices of drunkenness and revenge. That such a population, armed and disciplined, inflated with new ideas of liberty and citizenship, and at the same time shut out, both by colour and cha-



racter, from the counsels and society of the whites, must be dangerous to the state, it does not require great penetration to foresee. Perhaps the greatest security from such a contingency may be found in the hatred borne to them by the fourth class of inhabitants, the aboriginal Indians. Still these are negative, rather than positive friends. Their indolence and perhaps their interest, would lead them, in such a crisis, rather to conceal themselves in the woods and mountains, than to act as partizans.

Such is the existing state both of the city and republic of Guatemala. Composed of these combustible materials, its physical and political situation may be regarded as similar. Containing within its bosom an active internal fire under the influence of which it trembles and is convulsed; it is in hourly danger of eruptions more calculated to desolate than to enlighten, to destroy than to improve.

This gloomy prospect for the lovers of true freedom, becomes still darker to the eye of the philanthropist and the Christian, when viewed in connexion with the state of public morals. If a republic be strong in proportion to the mass of virtue concentrated in its population, and if it be in vain to look for political integrity in the absence of private honour, then is the situation of Guatemala truly lamentable. With a lazzaroni

in rags and filth, a coloured population drunken and revengeful, her females licentious and her males shameless, she ranks as a true child of that accursed city which still remains as a living monument of the fulfilment of prophecy and the forbearance of God, "the hold of every foul spirit, the cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

To this sweeping censure there are certainly many exceptions, but they are not sufficiently numerous to render such a description as a whole, unjust. The pure and simple sweets of domestic life, with its thousand tendernesses, and its gentle affections, are here exchanged for the feverish joys of a dissipated hour; and the peaceful home of love is converted into a theatre of mutual accusations and recriminations.

Among the lower orders this loose and vicious life leads to excesses, which, unrestrained by a vigilant police, produce the most melancholy consequences. The men generally carry a large knife stuck in the belt against the back, and the women a similar one, fastened in the garter of the stocking. These on every trifling occasion, they draw, and the result is often fatal. Not a day passes in which some one or other does not stain his hands in the blood of his fellow creature. On feast days and on Sundays, the average number killed is from four to five. From the number admitted into the hospital of St. Juan

de Dios, it appears that in the year 1827, near 1500 were stabbed in drunken quarrels, of whom from 3 to 400 died. Of these, probably fifty or sixty were assassinated secretly, without having any opportunity of defence.

The police, if such a thing can be said to exist, takes no notice of these events, and it would seem fabulous to relate, were it not confirmed by the most respectable testimony, that there is at liberty in Guatemala, at the present moment, more than one, of whom it is known that they have murdered several individuals. The respectable inhabitants defend themselves by carrying swords or pocket pistols in the evening, and are rarely molested; while the lower orders revenge the death of their relatives by taking away the life of the murderer the first convenient opportunity.

A circumstance of this kind occurred while I was residing in Guatemala, very near to the house in which I lived. About four o'clock in the afternoon a poor man was observed lying dead in the street, who had evidently been murdered. For some time no notice was taken of him; at length he was carried by some passers-by to the hospital, and it was immediately known that he had been killed by a shoemaker who resided near, and whose brother had fallen some months ago, by the hand of the deceased. This man had now

absented himself, but no means were used for his apprehension. A few shoulders were shrugged, a few “que lástimas” (what a pity) uttered, and there the matter ended. The shoemaker returned in a few days, resumed his occupations, and remains still undisturbed, unless some other has in turn, passed him to his final account.

The only offences noticed are political ones, and in these cases the soldiers act as civil officers. Of their suitability one melancholy instance fell immediately under my own observation. A lieutenant of infantry, and eight soldiers, were despatched to take a man prisoner who had committed some offence against the state. They entered the room in which he was sitting alone, about nine o'clock in the evening. He immediately blew out the candle and fired a pistol at their officer, whom he wounded. The eight soldiers report that their muskets missed fire: it is only known that in the confusion the prisoner escaped, and has not since been heard of. A suspicion having arisen a few days afterwards, that he was concealed in Guatemala, a second detachment was sent to capture him. The party mistook a discharged postman who was in the house, for their prisoner: the poor fellow resisted with a sword, and was immediately killed. Not content with passing five or six bullets through him, they pierced him with their bayonets, in order to

assure themselves of his death, and for this feat the leader of the detachment, was raised from a lieutenant to the rank of captain. After this, no further search was made for the real delinquent, and in two or three days the whole affair was forgotten.

Such was the exact state of the police of Guatemala in the year 1827, and the picture is certainly not overdrawn. The Patriot Cavalry, composed of the principal young men in the different shops and warehouses, was formed for the defence of the city, and is called out in case of tumult; but from their total want of discipline, and frequent refusals to obey the orders of their officers, they are but a poor protection either against internal or external enemies. In the month of August, a plan was formed for surprising the nightly guard, setting the prisoners free, and then murdering the chief officers of the government. This was discovered on the eve of its execution, and the Patriot Cavalry were called out at eleven o'clock at night. The corps consists of 150 men, and in this emergency only sixteen appeared.

The murder of the British consul, although arising from motives which but too powerfully influence the lower orders, cannot be considered as an event connected with passing circumstances. The primary motive was certainly revenge for

what the wretch chose to term the insults offered to him by his master, in the way of reproof. The secondary one, which probably determined him as to the time, was the hope of plunder. The sensation caused by the atrocious deed, will not easily be forgotten by those who, with the author, were only a few hours before dining with the deceased, and being waited upon by his murderer. It is not necessary to recall the circumstances which accompanied the horrid deed. Too often is the imagination injured, and the mind sickened, by similar recitals of human depravity.

The prison is spacious, and will contain from 3 to 400 criminals. In the summer of 1827, above that number were, for some time, in confinement. The prisoners sleep on dirty pallets, and many of the cells are in a filthy state; but as the rooms are tolerably well ventilated, they are on the whole healthy, and jail fever is unknown. The severest tortures have been here inflicted upon innocent persons, in order to induce confession; but I have been assured the practice was discontinued long before the revolution.

The processes in the criminal courts against offenders, are so long, and involved in such a multitude of forms and writings, as to render it impossible to do justice either to the prisoner or the public. Bad as was the state of things in

this respect before the revolution, they are now worse. While the prisons are crowded with criminals, the courts of justice are inactive, and in fact, a nullity. Imprisonment is the grand panacea for every evil, and when the prisoners increase too rapidly, so that the detention of so great a number is difficult and dangerous, thirty or forty, at the despotic command of the government, are marched off to the Castle of Omoa, where the climate soon puts an end to their miseries. Their bones mingle with those of thousands of their predecessors, and a new generation succeeds them, to occupy their places for a few months, and then, in turn, to make way for their successors.

Lawyers are an innumerable body, a certain proof that the laws are complex and confounded. In fact, a Guatimalian lawsuit is precisely the same thing as a chancery suit in England. Like a modern mouse-trap, the entrance is wide and tempting; half way in, it is impossible to withdraw,—the rest is an affair of your executors.

This wretched state of the criminal and civil courts of judicature, with the total absence of an organized police, although one of the causes of the frequency of crime, is by no means the most influential. The more immediate source of a great part of the wretchedness and consequent degradation of the lower classes, is to be found

in their prevailing habits of intoxication, and in the multitude of spirit-shops which, on every hand, offer temptations too powerful to be resisted by a people untrained to any habits of self-government. The liquor commonly taken, is prepared from what are termed *panelas*; these are small loaves of unrefined sugar, drawn from the cane, and by some called *raspings*; they are excessively sweet and cloying to the taste. Dissolved in water, and mingled with the juice of different fruits, the fluid is left to ferment until it becomes very strong and acquires its intoxicating effects. When in this state, it is considered fit for sale; and as it can be prepared at so cheap a rate as to come within the reach of the poorest Indian, immense quantities are disposed of, under the name of *chicha*, and these wretched creatures may be seen rolling about the streets and suburbs, in a state sometimes approaching to madness, and sometimes to insensibility, under its overpowering influence. In this way they spend the little money they acquire by their labour, and never rise higher in the scale of civilization than the low grade in which their progenitors have lived and died.

A more permanent and universal source both of crime and laxity of morals will however be found in the want of that early education which checks the growth of the corrupt principles of the



human heart, and fosters whatever is valuable to society, or honourable to man. Parents so dissipated themselves cannot be supposed to take much interest in the formation of the character of their offspring, who are as might be expected, generally left exposed to all the baneful influence of such example.

Nor is the evil at all counteracted by that intellectual cultivation which in some cases partly supplies the deficiency. There are two public or endowed schools for boys; the former belonging to the church, was established in the year 1548, and the latter under the direction of the municipality, about a century later. Each is endowed with an annual salary for the master of about 500 dollars. These situations are at present held by two ignorant old men who conduct the schools on the old Spanish system. A great portion of the time is occupied in recitations and in learning what they term the Christian doctrine. Under such direction the children after years of attendance are scarcely able to read or write decently. The united number on the books is about 400, but they attend very irregularly.

In each of the convents girls are taught to read as well as to sew, with the greatest neatness. The boys of the higher, and middle classes can generally read and write, but among girls the

latter is a rare accomplishment. In both cases, it is unaccompanied by that moral and religious instruction, which alone can make it valuable.

The most strenuous exertions have been made to introduce the Lancasterian system by the committee of that valuable institution, the British and Foreign School Society of London, but hitherto unsuccessfully. Congress has publicly expressed its determination to establish it, commissioners have been appointed and reports made, but from some cause or other no active steps have been taken to forward the object. The distracted state of the country, the want of finances, the secret hostility of the clergy, and the indolence of the government have all operated against its establishment. But it cannot be delayed many years. A republican form of government is more than any other a government of opinion, and it will soon be found vain to boast of a freedom whose root is rottenness. Knowledge, universally diffused, is the vital sap of the tree of liberty, and without this strengthening impulse in every branch, its beautiful foliage will fade and wither. The page of history proves to us that monarchies may exist in the midst of moral and intellectual darkness, but republicanism is a plant of light, and will perish if the sources of its life and vigour be long withdrawn. If therefore Guatemala maintains

her independence, she will early apply a remedy to the universal ignorance which prevails among her sons, and from this source alone can any considerable improvement in public morals rationally be expected.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Amusements,—Theatre,—Bull Fights,—Literature,—Newspapers,—Booksellers,—Fine Arts, &c. &c.*

THE stranger's first impression, that Guatemala is exceedingly dull and lifeless, will not, in all probability, be materially changed on a more intimate acquaintance; especially if he be one of that numerous class to whose very existence public amusements seem necessary, since there is not, perhaps, a city in the world where diversions of every species are more neglected.

The theatre,\* established about a year ago, is not much better in appearance than a country barn. In the heavy showers which frequently fall during the rainy season the water trickles through the roof, both into the pit and

\* The author would not have noticed an amusement, the moral tendency of which he considers ruinous, had it not been to illustrate the character of a people who can bear with no purer substitute for a barbarous exhibition than a licentious theatre. He does not know that the failure of the experiment can be regretted. Whether any thing would have been gained by the change may well be doubted. When will they learn that an early education in the principles of the Bible can alone effect any important change in the habits and manners of a nation?

boxes; and more than once, umbrellas have been as usefully employed within, as without the house. The scenery is wretchedly painted, and the performers, with the exception of two European comedians, are said to be inferior to the lowest village strollers. The numbers who attended at the beginning of the year, were not sufficient to pay the expenses, and the company having struggled some time against the losses connected with empty benches, gave public notice, in the month of July, 1827, that owing to the thin attendance of the citizens, the performances would cease, and there is now little prospect of their being renewed.

This species of amusement, was originally established in the hope that it might become popular, and supersede, in great measure, the barbarous diversions of the bull-ring; but, although the pieces chosen were sufficiently licentious, and the dances somewhat indecent, with the additional temptation of the performances being held on Sundays and saints' days, it was not sufficient to wean the worthy citizens from their favourite "*Toros*," and the exhibitions of the latter are still well attended. These, however, only take place in the dry season, and are neither conducted in so cruel a manner as in Spain, or the other parts of America, nor is the same degree of skill and courage displayed by the combatants. In the

eye of the connoisseur, they are deemed far inferior to similar exhibitions in Mexico; but they still possess sufficient attractions to draw crowds of every rank, and of each sex, to witness the barbarous spectacle, and to be brutalized by its heart-hardening tendencies.

A few large card parties, a solitary ball, and one or two billiard tables, will complete the catalogue, with the exception of that infamous nest of vice and cruelty—the cock-pit—which has, however, fallen into disrepute, and is only attended by the most depraved part of the people. The most successful speculations in this department have been those of travelling troops of equestrians and jugglers; but as they do not form any permanent source of amusement, they can hardly be considered as belonging to the city.

To name the word literature, in connexion with this part of Spanish America, seems almost ridiculous; yet, a slight sketch of the labours of the printing presses of Guatemala may not be altogether uninteresting. At what period this art was first introduced it is impossible to say; but it must have been exercised in the old city for above a century; since a treatise on practical arithmetic, by Father Padilla, a secular priest, was printed there in the year 1732. Whether any other work, equally useful, has issued from the

walls of the printing-office since that period, is a problem it perhaps would be difficult to solve.

Its chief occupation is to reprint papers from Rome, to publish the letters and charges of the archbishop, with now and then a declamatory sermon; and to supply the good Catholics with little volumes of prayers and devotional exercises, for peculiar times and seasons. Since the revolution, however, three others have been established, which find employment in publishing the newspapers. A number of these publications have at various times, seen the light; but with the greater part, it has been but to be born, and die. At present they are three in number, and published weekly: one called the *Gazette of the Government*; another, the *Gazette of the State*; and the third, *The Indicador*. All these support the measures of the present administration; are equally dull and uninteresting, and have a very limited sale. No news makes its appearance in any of them until it has been generally known in the city for a month, excepting official government papers, which are exceedingly long and tedious; and with these their columns are mostly filled. As the presses obtain little other employment, they of course are not very profitable to their owners.

The last book published, was a volume of poetical fables, by a Dr. Goyena, who styles himself

a son of Central America. These possess considerable merit, and display a degree of talent, which under proper cultivation, would have raised their author to eminence. The sale of them, however, has been scarcely sufficient to cover his expenses, and the book has not raised its literary parent from that poverty to which literature, especially of a poetical kind, almost invariably subjects its votaries. A system of stenography has also been prepared by one of the priests; but finding it impossible to obtain a sufficient number of subscribers to defray expenses, he has wisely abstained from printing.

Engraving is executed neatly, but the artists obtain no employ. The supply of books is by no means deficient, and rather exceeds the demand than otherwise. Spanish editions of heavy books, such as *Universal Histories*, &c. may be found in the stores of the old merchants, and lighter works, chiefly translations from the French, and many of them very exceptionable, are to be met with in two or three different shops, opened by agents of French booksellers. Mr. Ackerman, of London, has certainly rendered a much greater service to the country, in the class of books and prints which he has endeavoured to introduce. His elementary catechisms are exceedingly valuable, and his drawings and fancy articles will probably tend to foster, if not to



create a taste for the fine arts. In these, many of the natives excel; a fact, which may be proved by reference to the various sculptures and copies of paintings which have been executed by their different artists. Indeed, in the present day, they can boast a miniature painter altogether self-taught, who, for exactness of resemblance, if not for delicacy of finish, may be placed in competition with almost any European.

As musical instrument makers, they are by no means contemptible. Two or three of the organs used in the churches, and particularly a very fine one in the cathedral, were manufactured in the city, and both in tone and outward ornament, they are equal to the majority built in Europe. Every species of fancy work they produce with great delicacy. The makers of artificial flowers surpass in the exactness of their imitations of nature our English manufacturers; and the workers in wax, a tribe little known amongst us, succeed admirably in the production of models and specimens.

## CHAPTER V.

*Religious Processions,—Masked Dancers,—Clergy, regular and secular,—Ecclesiastical Quarrels,—Low State of true Piety,—Extracts from Journal.*

UNDER the head of amusements, rather than devotional exercises, ought to be classed those numerous and splendid processions which claim so frequently the time and reverence of all classes of the community in catholic countries. In Guatemala scarcely a day passes without some one or other of these pageants inviting the attention of the devout, and the laugh of the scorner. A slight account of the celebrated one termed Corpus will enable the reader to judge of the rest.

This takes place in the month of June; and on the day set apart for the festivity, the shops are closed, and business suspended. About ten o'clock the cavalcade moves from the cathedral. A troop of military marching to a slow tune lead the way, and are followed by six of the finest Indian girls that can be procured, bearing large wax candles, and dressed in the ancient costume

of their tribes, accompanied by the great drum carried on the back of an Indian, and beaten by two others. These are succeeded by men bearing on their shoulders wooden platforms, on which are placed images of saints. Other representations of beatified cardinals and bishops follow, escorted by angels with spreading wings. Then succeeds an immense statue of St. Peter bearing the keys, and supported by angels on each side. Other images pass forward in succession and immediately precede the Host, which is carried under a splendid canopy, and accompanied by the archbishop and the dignified clergy. The various orders of friars, the curas and the collegial students in their robes follow, and fresh images of saints and angels, with a new troop of military bring up the rear.

Proceeding round the Plaza, the procession stops at every corner, where are erected at considerable expense large altars, covered with artificial flowers, looking-glasses, and wax candles; while thousands of kneeling spectators form a deep line on either side. Its setting out and return to the cathedral are notified by frequent discharges of sky-rockets, and the houses by which the host passes are hung with red cloth or silk.

By these ridiculous, yet dazzling shows, the church of Rome firmly attaches to her interests a superstitious and ignorant mob, and still reaps

new benefits from that artful policy by which her Jesuitical children led nations captive, and arrived at a degree of power and influence obnoxious and dangerous to their haughty parent. On the imagination of the simple Indians these splendid spectacles take a powerful hold, uniting, as many of them do, several of the heathenish rites of their ancient superstitions, with the showy ritual of a corrupted Christianity.

Walking through the streets one day, I was painfully surprised to observe a large statue of the Saviour borne on a platform by four men, and accompanied by ten or a dozen wretches grotesquely dressed and as absurdly masked, who were dancing before it in order to excite the mirth of the populace. It seemed to me a melancholy fulfilment of the prophetic declaration, "*He is become the laugh of the drunkard, and the sport of fools.*" But such is the temporising, and worldly spirit of this Babylon of the nations, that the only reply I could get from one of her worthiest ministers to an indignant remonstrance was, "We do not approve it, but it is necessary to give life to the festivity!"

Perhaps there is no country in the world where religious processions are so numerous, or the great mass of the people so fanatical as in Guatemala. Always distinguished for its rigid attention to the ceremonies of the church: it now

stands pre-eminent. In Buenos Ayres, Columbia, and Peru, the revolution has in this respect affected an important change; and even in Mexico, where the power of the clergy is still considerable, its superstitious frenzy is considerably repressed. But here every thing remains the same as before, not a priest has been ejected, or a friar displaced; and although their temporal influence has been somewhat lessened, their spiritual authority remains undiminished.

A singular proof of their power to influence the decrees of the government has just been given. In July 1826, the supreme government, in imitation of the other republics, passed a law fixing the age at which young people should be permitted to enter the religious houses. The clergy resisted the enforcement of it, and in Sept. 1827, the present party, by a ridiculous decree in which they contradict every statement they had previously made, have abrogated the former law, and mere children are again permitted to immolate themselves for life.

In number they are fewer in proportion to the population than in Mexico, and this circumstance may, in some measure, have contributed to their security. From a statement issued by the government, it appears that there are not more than 300 friars in the United Provinces, of whom about 200 reside in the city; while the different

female convents do not contain more than 150 nuns. Of the secular clergy no census has been published. Although considerably more numerous than the regular they bear no proportion to the clerical body of Mexico, nor does there exist amongst them that enormous disparity of revenue which Humboldt describes as disgracing the church in New Spain. The peculiar privileges of the ecclesiastical courts remain untouched. The archbishop still has the power of punishing his clergy, by confinement, and although for crimes against society or the state, a priest may be judged by the civil courts, no punishment can be inflicted without the consent of the archbishop, to whom he is delivered.

In political matters the body is at the present moment somewhat divided. The disputes with the state of St. Salvador are intimately connected with the claim of a Dr. Delgado to a bishopric, and although by far the greater majority cleave to the archbishop, and the decisions of the court of Rome, still there are a few stubborn dissentients who have placed themselves out of the reach of ecclesiastical discipline.

The friars as a body still live in hope of the reconquest of the country by Spain, and the consequent re-establishment of their influence. I was much amused to observe the earnestness and mysterious shrug with which one of the old

fathers inquired the latest news from Europe when we visited his convent, where we found him busily employed in reading a volume of *Ivanhoe*, and I doubt not devoutly wishing that the happy days of darkness there depicted might once more return, and Friar Tuck and his Britannic Majesty again be bosom friends. A report had been circulated in the city, that a Spanish expedition was preparing in the Havanna, and his tottering limbs seemed to derive new strength from the rumour. It was evident enough that he thought Spain the most powerful empire of the world, although policy obliged him in great measure to conceal his opinions.

The controversy before alluded to, between the two provinces with respect to the right of appointing a bishop, threatens to strike a fatal blow at the influence of the church. In Salvador its effects are plainly visible in the almost universal infidelity which prevails, and among the middle classes of Guatemala the same epidemic malady is rapidly spreading. The spiritual part of the controversy commenced when the people of San Salvador, claiming their right to create a bishopric, appointed Dr. Delgado to the office. The archbishop of Guatemala declaring the appointment to be a privilege of Rome, refused to own his new brother, and appealed to the Pope.

A paper war immediately commenced, one party attacked, and the other defended. In an

amusing pamphlet, Father José Andrés, after denying the right of any government to interfere with the spiritualities or secularities of the church, denounces San Salvador as an infamous adultress, denies the power of the new bishop to absolve from sin, or to administer the sacraments, assures the inferior clergy that as God scattered the tribes of Israel who separated themselves from the house of David, so surely would he destroy those who separated themselves from their lawful bishop, and calls upon the people to come out from the tabernacles of these impious men, lest they be involved in their sins. He insists that the tithes of San Salvador, are due to the church of Guatemala, and says they who withhold them, rob not man but God; concluding with many assurances that money is of little value when compared with the prayers and intercessions of their lawful spiritual advisers. To this Dr. Cañas replies in another pamphlet, and the worthy friar returns again to the field with fresh vigour, and fulminates new anathemas against the self elected bishop. He reminds him of the heavy punishment inflicted upon Ham the son of Noah, for despising an earthly parent, and argues that if his punishment were heavy, much more severe will be the lot of those who despise their spiritual parent the Pope.

In the midst of these disputes the march of infidelity began to be perceived by some of the



clergy. An earnest address to the clerical body both regular and secular was published by three priests, in which after lamenting the prevailing spirit among the people, to penetrate into mysteries, and both in public and in private to ridicule the dogmas of religion, they call upon their brethren to exert themselves with fresh vigour, and unitedly to oppose the new doctrine. These efforts have however produced little effect in arresting the progress of the contagion, which is rapidly spreading far and wide. San Salvador, at present in a state of complete anarchy, sends forth a weekly newspaper in which the authority of the pope, the celibacy of the clergy, and monastic institutions are openly ridiculed, and quotations from Voltaire striking at the root of all religion, are constantly inserted.

In the midst of these ominous events, the archbishop under the influence of that infatuation which so frequently clings to men in desperate circumstances, has threatened to excommunicate all who obey the new bishop, and has published a violent sermon in defence of the Pope. A few extracts may not be uninteresting. In the dedication to the most holy father Leo XII. the archbishop, after rejoicing in the zeal with which his holiness has defended the rights of the chair of St. Peter, adds, "We pray that holy apostle that he may obtain from God for you long life and

tranquil times, and that you may see all this new world ever in your fold, and may augment the number of those sheep which Christ has commended to you as his vicar on earth, to lead and guide to heaven." The sermon commences by an address to the clergy urging them to zeal in these troublous times, and to keep firm in their obedience to the holy see. This preliminary exhortation concludes thus, "behold then the necessity of being within the divine bark of the fisherman, lest we make shipwreck of the faith and become the plaything of the waves, or the unhappy victims of piratical mariners. This tumultuous sea can only be navigated in one boat, in order to arrive at eternal happiness. This the greatest enemies of the church have confessed, and I am about to prove it, as a warning to those incautious and malicious men, who would cast America out of this one ship, and leave her to be tossed in the tempestuous sea of every heresy. For power to address you with effect, and so as to produce fruit, aid me to implore the divine grace through the intercession of Mary, our beloved mother saluting her with the angel "Ave Maria, &c."

The sermon is founded upon Matt. xiv. 28: "Lord, if it be thou, command that I come to thee upon the water." Its style is declamatory, and its object is to prove that there is no

salvation but through the See of Rome. In it he alludes to the wish of some to separate the Americas from the Pope; warns them against following the wicked example of Henry VIII. and Luther, the two great reformers, and quotes thirty confessions of learned Protestants, who acknowledge salvation *may* be found in the church of Rome: from whence he shrewdly argues, that since Protestants allow this fact, while Catholics assert salvation to be impossible out of their fold, it must be good policy in all to abide within the pale.

He then concludes thus: "O, priests of the Most High! now that you have heard from the mouth of your enemies, that most interesting of all acknowledgements, that there is salvation in the church of Rome, remain firmly seated in the ship of Peter, which can never sink; be united and obedient to the chair of Peter, which can never err; stand firm upon that Rock which can never be moved, the only anchor of our faith, and of our eternal safety. My brethren, venerable for your faith, piety, doctrine, veneration, and obedience to the vicar of Jesus Christ, and successor of St. Peter, announce these truths to your people, that they may be preserved from the flood of heresy which inundates the earth, in this only ark of Noah. Think upon, then, and preach these sayings, that following the voice of the only

shepherd to whom God has given the keys of heaven, we may merit and obtain an entrance into the church triumphant, by that port whither the holy and secure ship of the apostle, ever living in his successors, is now bearing us. Amen."

In the midst of controversies such as these, it is vain to look for many followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. The votaries both of superstition and infidelity make their voices to be heard in the streets, but true piety loves the shade, and seeks retirement. It may be that there are those who have not bowed the knee to this two-fold Baal; but if they exist, it is in the secrecy of the closet, and who they are must be left for the day of judgment to declare.

In the absence of better comforters, the lower orders repair at certain seasons, to worship those images which have become celebrated for their miraculous properties. These pilgrimages are often distant, and the journey arduous; but what will not superstition accomplish?

The church of Esquipulas is famous on account of its containing an image of the Saviour crucified, executed in ebony, in 1595, by Cataño, an eminent artist. Its fame for miracles was so great that crowds of pilgrims formerly came from different parts of Mexico, and on the fifteenth of January, its festival, 80,000 people have been known to assemble.

At the present day, the number is greatly decreased, and not more than from 10 to 20,000 congregate.

At Viejo, about four leagues from Leon, is an image of the Virgin, which is visited in the month of February. This effigy is honoured, according to the account of the natives, as being the gift of the immaculate Virgin St<sup>a</sup>. Theresa. In short, every province has its wonder-working image, which, notwithstanding political changes, will continue to be worshipped until the universal diffusion of knowledge, and especially of Christian knowledge, dissipates the foolish vision, and scatters their deluded votaries.

During my stay I was enabled to procure the Bibles and Testaments of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the publications of the Spanish Translation Society, to be exposed in one of the shops for sale; but from what I was able to observe, as well as from the number disposed of, there existed no demand for such books. Other means of throwing them into circulation are not practicable at present. What changes may take place in this respect, before long, it is impossible to say; but it is to be feared many years will elapse before any thing like a taste either for rational instruction or for the most valuable of all knowledge, will become general.

A few extracts from a journal I kept while in Guatemala, will probably exhibit more vividly the true character of the rigid Catholics than any lengthened disquisition. These memoranda are therefore given in the same form in which they were noted down for my own future perusal, without any attention to order.

June 3. A young student for the church visited us. I offered him Bogue on the New Testament, and Paley's Evidences, to read. He looked at them, said they were very good, but laid them down.

June 4. Passed a convent of monks with M. who showed me the building, and asked my opinion of monastic institutions. I replied "let your light so shine before men, &c." She said her father wished her when a girl to take the veil, but she declined, and thought it better to be useful in the world. On our return I showed her a copy of the Scriptures as the ground work of all our belief. She asked if it were our custom to read it morning and evening. I said "Yes," "Very good," she replied, but exhibited no wish to read it for herself.

June 8. Padre B. visited us this morning. He seems a very intelligent man, and is able to read and translate English with facility. This he has acquired solely by the assistance of an old French

and English dictionary. His opinions are liberal, he regretted much the want of books in America, and attributed it chiefly to the inquisition, which had prevented the entry of any scientific works whatever. He asked me some questions about the Protestant religion. I showed him Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, in Spanish, and offered to lend it to him, but he declined; he looked at a few pages and said it was very good. I showed him a Bible in Spanish, he only admired the binding. He wished to know the points of difference between the Anglican and Roman churches. I gave him an English Prayer-book, and pointed out to him the articles. When he came to those on purgatory, transubstantiation, and the adoration of the saints, he shrugged his shoulders, and observed opinions differed. I referred him to the Scriptures, but he declined controversy. From what I have seen of him I suppose him to be a man fully aware of the follies of the Romish church, but unwilling to avow sentiments which cut at the very root of priestly influence. He inquired about the mode of visiting the sick and dying, of administering the sacraments, &c. I explained fully, and informed him that the padres of the Anglican church did not profess to forgive sins, because they knew he only who could read the heart was able.

June 9. Visited an auction of the goods, pictures and reliques of a deceased padre. The room was full of priests. One of them was bitterly complaining that no one would buy the reliques. These consisted of the gums of some of the saints, enclosed in silver, and a few little images made of the ashes of others. The poor priest declared the neglect of them to be scandalous, some one had observed they were of no use. The paintings were mostly of saints, badly coloured and sold very high. While we were here the archbishop arrived, he was received with the greatest respect, all the priests remaining uncovered in his presence.

June 10. Met with the Canonigo T. When informed that I was a Protestant, he eagerly entered into controversy. I declined setting up one religious establishment in opposition to another, and referred all to the Scriptures. He seems a well read and intelligent man, but better acquainted with controversy than the Bible; and did not at all appear to like the doctrine of the religion of Jesus being so simple, that "a wayfaring man though a fool cannot err therein." The priests have been careful to leave the impression that Protestantism is necessarily careless, both of doctrine and practice.

June 15. X. called, and finding me alone ridiculed the approaching procession of Corpus as



absurd. He is evidently an infidel: having never seen religion in a simpler and purer form, he considers it altogether a system of priestcraft. Visited his house the following day. The first book I saw was Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary. Numbers of French books, although prohibited, have been introduced here. French novels of the worst description are to be met with in abundance, most of these are printed cheaply, with plates wretchedly coloured. Subsequently he received of me Bogue's Essay, and a copy of the New Testament, both of which he promised to read with care and attention.

Visited M. a devoted Catholic old lady. We found her busily occupied in preparing an altar for the approaching procession of Corpus. The base was of wood, covered with looking glass, and hung round with cut glass in festoons, with glass candlesticks. Above this was the altar, on which was placed six massy silver candlesticks, and the whole covered with beautifully executed artificial flowers, of which she had made three large boxes full. The expense of this was about 150 dollars. To my inquiry as to the benefit of these pageants, the reply was, "It is the custom of our church." She expressed herself very anxious for my salvation, and assured me it could not be out of the pale of the Romish church. Two priests came in while we were talking. She

told them who I was, said I had a good heart, but unhappily was not a Catholic. One of the priests, who appeared remarkably ignorant, asked if the English were Christians, and seemed much surprised when told they believed in the divinity of the Son of God and the influences of the Holy Spirit. He seemed to have an idea that Henry VIII. offended with the pope, had established in England a religion of his own, solely the offspring of his own brain; and could scarcely be persuaded that marriage in England was binding for life: this I found afterwards to be very generally discredited. He then proceeded to argue most vehemently in defence of the Pope and of general councils, the doctrine of the real presence, and the mediation of the saints, quoting doctors of theology with the greatest rapidity, and seemed much surprised I was not at once a convert, assuring me when I had heard all the proofs it was impossible to resist conviction.

June 18. The young student before referred to again called, and found me reading the Scriptures. I requested him to hear me, and correct my pronunciation, and by this means read to him the fifth and sixth chapters of St. Matthew. He was evidently pleased when I concluded, and showed no disposition to hear or read more. The second verse of the third chapter is translated "*Haced Penitencia*, and not as it ought to have been.

*arrepentios*. To discover the impression left upon his mind I asked him if the two terms were synonymous. His reply was "No! *Arrepentios* signifies repentance in the heart. *Haced Penitencia*, the penance of the church, the mortification of the body." I had heard it asserted before that no one could be misled by the latter expression, but it is evident that it will be used to support one of the most dangerous heresies of the church of Rome. He subsequently brought me a defence of popery, which he wished me to accept, and received from me in return the first volume of Milner's Ecclesiastical History, which has been translated into Spanish.

Sunday. On this day the shops are closed, and business suspended, but the markets are carried on as usual, and the theatre is open. The Sabbath is by no means sanctified. Three priests were playing at cards with G. in the morning, and in the intervals of the game, the propriety of allowing the theatre to be open was discussed. Some of them argued that in time of war, it was more suitable to think of God, to pray and to fast, than to enjoy the merriment of a comedy; but no one seemed to think his own employment unsuitable for the day. S. and three friends called to invite us to accompany them to the theatre. We declined, stating our reasons. They comforted themselves by the thought that if we kept the

Sabbath more strictly than they, we did not attend to the various feasts which the Romish church sets apart as sacred. It seems out of their power to imagine that a religion of love can exist, and can only conceive of the Bible being read by Protestants, as a labour for which they hope to receive heaven. T. who was present, appeared to know something of English customs, and explained the strictness with which the sabbath was observed as well as some other peculiarities, and ended by saying—*Religious* Protestants read the Bible every day, they believe only in the Bible, they regulate all their conduct exactly by the Bible. They are Biblists. The rest were silent and did not seem exactly to like this definition of Protestantism. Happy would it be for Protestants were it more generally a true one.

June 29. Called at the house of Donna Maria E. She has a sister in the convent of St<sup>a</sup>. Clara. She had just heard from her, stating how happy and contented she was in her solitude, and would on no account change her mode of life. That the world may be in the heart, although the eye is closed to it, they seem to have no conception.

July 12. Padre — called in to-day. He asked several questions about Europe, displaying the grossest ignorance. He remarked, that the whole of Europe was not so large as Guatimala, with several other observations equally learned.

Observing a pair of globes, he looked at them for some time, and astounded me by the discovery that the terrestrial represented Europe, and the celestial, America. How such men can have got ordination, seems astonishing.

July 17. N. has informed me very gravely to-day, that the question whether or no the Catholic religion shall be the religion of England, has been discussed in the commons, and lost only by a majority of four. From the same quarter, he has heard that in the next year an act will be passed in England, suppressing all the sects, and permitting only popery, and that the cabinets of Madrid and Vienna were treating in order to make Catholicism the universal religion. This information he has received from some priests, and all seem highly delighted with the thought. Yet this individual, on commercial subjects, is a very sensible man. Such remarks only prove the excessive ignorance that exists with respect to the nations of Europe.

July 22. A. sat with with me some time to-day, and blamed me for not confessing to the priest. I gave him my reasons for not doing it. He ended his defence of confession by saying: "But I ought not to talk with you on these subjects: it is sin. I have confessed to my priest a former conversation with you, and he tells me I ought not to enter into any controversy. The priests only

are sufficiently learned for that purpose. He assures me it is a sin to refer to the Bible, without the notes of the church." I said, can the priest answer for you to God, or have you to answer for yourself. His answer was melancholy, but striking: "I am a plain man of business, and have had no opportunities of study. He is my spiritual adviser; I have confidence in him, and if he leads me into error, my blood is upon his head." Had his confessor been present, he would without doubt have willingly received the responsibility with a blindness of heart equal to those of old, who on a different occasion, exclaimed, "His blood be upon us and upon our children."

July 26. This is St. James' day; all the shops are shut, and it is kept as a feast day. St. James is considered the patron saint of the Americas, and also of Gallicia in Spain. According to their account, he drove the Moors from Gallicia, appearing before the armies of the Christians on a white horse. All these things, with an infinity of fables which belong to the middle ages, are here firmly believed.

July 30. Visited the Cathedral this night, to hear vespers, previous to the celebration of the feast of San Ignatius De Loyola, the founder of the order of Jesuits. It is a neat building, and has a fine organ. On this evening an image of Loyola was placed upon an altar, beautifully

decorated with artificial flowers, and to it, as well as to the empty pulpit, every passer-by bent the knee. I felt myself an intruder. I could not conform, and I fear only excited anger by non-conformity; indeed, there is a degree of danger, which it is wrong needlessly to incur.

August 6. The total absence of piety and spirituality in the forms of worship, is but too evident. The mere repetition of words, although with a smiling or laughing countenance, is considered sufficient. and in many instances a want of decency is observable which even policy would seem to forbid.

August 13 Day for the celebration of the transit of the Virgin. In the house of every rigid Catholic, an altar is erected in the sala or parlour, and recitations performed from three till four in the afternoon. The one raised in the house where we dwell, is a cushion, stuffed with wool, and covered with gold lace and spangles; on this, an image of the Virgin lying dead, is placed. She is clothed in gold and spangles, and her head-dress as well as her pillows, are of the best Flemish lace. From three to four prayers are recited to her before this image, and two waxen candles, in silver candlesticks, are kept continually burning. For fifteen nights successively this altar is to be illuminated, and in addi-

tion to the afternoon prayers, recitations are to be repeated before it every night, at eight o'clock. I asked how this could be reconciled with the honour due only to the "one Mediator appointed between God and man—the man Christ Jesus;" but could get no other reply than, "Ave Maria Santissima." The Virgin, is here the chief object of adoration: if any thing be lost, she is solicited to restore it, or to direct where it may be found; if any be sick, she is implored to heal, and on every occasion is addressed as an appointed mediator. The tradition given respecting her transit, as it is termed, in a small book of prayers for the fifteen days, is, "That at the day of Pentecost, she was in the house with the apostles, and was the first who received the gift of the spirit; that a voice was heard from heaven, saying, 'Come, my dove, my friend, my spouse!' and that immediately her soul ascended to heaven, her body remaining on the earth, shining like the sun." The apostles, it is added, buried it, and after three days, it was raised again, and exalted at the right hand of the Saviour, where she has since remained, to intercede with her Son, for all the faithful.

August 26. Violent thunderstorm with very vivid flashes of lightning: the electric fluid fell in six or seven different parts of the city, scorching the goods in some of the tiendas, but happily



no lives were lost. At the time it happened we were in the house of Y. who lighted candles before an image of the Virgin, and began to recite prayers. As it continued, still doubting his security, he drew out a charm or waxen relique, which had been purchased at a high price, from Rome, and placed it upon the table, and kneeling before it felt himself at rest, and out of danger.

September 19. In conversing with the priests I have frequently found it difficult to restrain a smile at the eagerness with which they disclaim coercive methods of conversion. Conviction only is in their mouths, as if the Romish Church had never persecuted.

T. to-day defended the worship of images because they were representations of that which is holy. I read her the second commandment, and she at once denied that it was in the Catholic Bible. I fetched her one with the notes of the church, and then she believed, finding it explained away. This did not surprise me, as in all the catechisms for the children, and copies of the commandments, the second is always omitted, while to make up the number, the tenth is divided into two. The fourth is also always greatly altered, the feasts of the church being substituted for the Sabbath. Such abominable

corruptions of Scripture does Papacy permit and sanction.

November 22. Padre — in conversation to-day, when heated by some paragraphs he had seen in the newspaper, declared, that if he had the power he would at once extinguish the art of printing, and forbid education. To the instruction of the Indians he always objects, as calculated to make them ungovernable. That this is a general, although suppressed feeling, there can be no doubt, and it might be a question worth discussing, how far an exclusive Papal establishment can possibly exist without impairing the liberties of an infant republic, and whether the genius of the one is not directly opposed to the prosperity of the other. The Italian republics might be adduced as a proof of the practicability of their union; but at that time religious opinions did not clash, besides which, they were governed altogether by an aristocracy. Louisiana and Georgia may be said to be Catholic States, but they have no exclusive establishment.

November 24. Padre — wishing to convert me, asked what penalty would be inflicted upon me on my return to England, if I went to mass and conformed to the Catholic ceremonies here? I assured him, none; at which he expressed his surprise that I did not conform when in a Catho-

lic country. I told him, religion was too important to change with climate, but he at once offered to answer to God for me, assuring me he possessed the power of pardoning sin, and that what he sealed on earth would be sealed in heaven; yet this man is totally destitute of every kind of religious feeling, and as ignorant as it is possible for man to be.

November 27. Visited M. to-day, who was very ill and thought herself dying. I have frequently been pleased to hear her speak on religious subjects, her doctrines always appearing more scriptural than the rest; yet I found her, in the fear of death perfectly miserable. In my presence she entreated the priest not to leave her for a moment, invoked all the celebrated images of the country, ordered candles to be placed before the images in the house, called loudly upon our Lord of Esquipulas, (a celebrated wonder-working image above 150 miles distant) and vowed if he would restore her, to make a pilgrimage to his shrine, and to give twenty dollars to the poor of Esquipulas. In all this, her thoughts never turned upon the sacrifice of Christ, or the merits of his blood, yet all these things she professes to believe, and I have heard her dwell upon them with pleasure in common conversation.

December 8. Gave to Padre C. a complete set of the Spanish tracts, published by the Religious

Tract Society in London, which he received with the greatest pleasure. I could dispose of any number of these productions, but I am not sanguine as to the good which might be expected to result. It is not for us to decide where God will give or where he will withhold the blessing; but viewed as means, I conceive millions might be circulated without the conversion of a single soul from the legal and idolatrous system of Popery to entire faith in the one only Saviour.\* From the circulation of the Scriptures, (even as translated by Scio de San Miguel,) good may be anticipated, but it is future rather than present. Popery throws a thousand chains around its votaries, and until these are broken, and the mind emancipated, and the whole system exposed as Antichrist, no great hope can be entertained for their moral regeneration. The desire to possess a Bible, by no means implies a sense of its value, or a disposition to study it. In Spanish America it has been forbidden fruit, and therefore it is longed for. If it be read, it is with a mind wholly subject to the decisions of the Romish Church, but it more frequently happens, that curiosity being satisfied, it is left on the shelf neglected and for-

\* The author would by no means be understood to disapprove of the publications of this most important institution—so far as they go they are excellent. The species of Tracts which he thinks needful could not at present be put into circulation.

gotten. Considered as seed which may one day produce an abundant harvest, its general circulation is however, highly important. These neglected copies may lie like so many trains of combustible matter among the rubbish by which they are surrounded, apparently inefficient and harmless, till some second Luther shall do in the new world, what his predecessor did in the old, boldly apply the torch, and kindle a flame at once purifying and enlightening, whose blaze shall never be extinguished.

**December 10.** Nothing can exceed the vapidness of the remarks the priests make on the vital truths of the Gospel; they speak of them as of subjects which have to be acknowledged, but may at the same time be despised with impunity.

**December 20.** Padre — complaining of being obliged by his duties to read the service of the mass twice a day—he seems determined however to get through it as carelessly as possible, reading it aloud before us, and smiling and laughing at the same time. He had the assurance to insist at dinner to-day, that God had said in the Gospel that the clergy were the darlings of his eye, and that were they ever so wicked, the laity had nothing to do with it: this he positively asserted to be a literal quotation from Scripture, and his hearers humbly acknowledged the orthodoxy of his doctrine.

January 6. Padre —— showed us a silver watch he had just received from some one for whom he was to say six masses. In all probability some poor widow has given it to him to say masses for the soul of her deceased husband, as in this way all the ornaments and plate of those who have not money, is generally disposed of. He laughing, declares it to be a good bargain, and vows he will not say one more than the stipulated number.

Such is Popery, and such are Popish priests in Spanish America. That amongst so numerous a body, there may be found many estimable for their virtues, is as certain as that a far more numerous catalogue might be made of those notorious for their vices. In reflecting on the degraded and corrupt state to which the church has arrived in these parts, the mind is forcibly struck with the striking parallel which might be drawn between its ministers and the scribes and Pharisees of old, as depicted by our Lord. Like them they have a master whom they reverence more than the words of God,—even their own vain traditions. Like them they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, neither going in themselves nor suffering them that are entering to go in. Like them they devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers. Like them they compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and

when he is made, they make him twofold more the child of hell than themselves. Like them they pay strict attention to the external ceremonial, but omit the weightier matters of the law. Like them they boast themselves in the magnificence of their temples, and forget that God is not worshipped in temples made with hands. Like them they clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Like them they build the tombs of the prophets and adore the memory of the saints, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, while they themselves are filling up the measure of the iniquities of their fathers.

But the parallel may be carried still further, against Jerusalem, the city of the God of Israel, the peculiar favourite of heaven, and even in the midst of all her corruptions, the only centre of true religion—against her, notwithstanding all her advantages, was the doom pronounced: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!” Let the page of history tell how awfully that doom has been fulfilled. Against Rome, the professed head of Christendom, who prides herself that her bishops are received in direct succession from the apostles; who adores the name of Christ, and glories in offering honour to his most devoted followers—against her is the sentence gone forth,

“ Double unto her double, according to her works. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much trouble and sorrow give her; for her plagues shall come in one day—death, and mourning, and famine! and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.” Truly may it be said of her. She is as a “ whited sepulchre, beautiful indeed outwardly, but inwardly full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.”



## CHAPTER VI.

*Climate, — Temperature, — Rainy Season, —  
Thunder Storms, — Earthquakes, — Debility,  
— Diseases, — Smallpox.*

IN describing cities, ruins, or romantic scenery, every one is in danger of stating rather the species than the degree of his enjoyment; the latter is almost always exaggerated. And even when this is not the case, so much depends upon the state of the body and mind of the individual at the time he experienced his sensations, that it becomes almost impossible for another following the same route to bear witness to his fidelity, by having enjoyed the same degree of delight, or received precisely similar impressions. But in giving the climate of any country, or part of a country, no such risk is incurred, since of all other things this has least to do with the imagination. It may, therefore, be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that Guatemala literally enjoys a perpetual spring.

Situated at an elevation of about 5000 feet above the level of the ocean, in what are called by the natives, “*Tierras Templadas.*” or the

temperate regions. this beautiful portion of the new world never feels the intensity of a summer's sun, or knows the stormy blasts of a wintry cold. The thermometer, during the whole year, scarcely varies. The average heat, in the middle of the day, may be considered as from 68 to 70 degrees. Fahrenheit. in the shade.

To this equality of temperature. there are, it is true. a few striking exceptions. During the period of the north winds. a current of cold air sometimes passes over the city in an evening, and produces within a few hours a difference of twenty degrees. Such changes, however, are both rare and transient.

Although the elevation of Guatemala approaches so near to that at which the clouds float over lands contiguous to the sea. this delicious spot is scarcely ever enveloped in those thick fogs which generally descend upon cities similarly situated. The environs. although now neglected, might be made to produce every variety of fruits and vegetables. all of which are capable of being brought to perfect maturity on the neighbouring hills and mountains. which are carpeted, during the whole year. with the most beautiful flowers, expanded in full perfection.

The seasons. instead of dividing to themselves four distinct portions of the year, here mingle, and know only the period of the rains. and of the

dry weather. The latter begins towards the close of the month of **October**, and lasts until the end of **May**, during which time only a few showers occasionally refresh the thirsty ground. But in the beginning of **June**, the rolling thunders and the forked lightning, begin to echo over the mountains and illuminate the hills, notifying the near approach of the semi-annual rains. The clouds, at first seen only as scattered specks on the horizon, now begin to congregate in the zenith, and copious showers swell the channels, and pour in torrents along the streets.

These seasons however are not so gloomy to the inhabitants, as the term would lead us to suppose. From six in the morning, till three or four in the afternoon, an unclouded sky generally invites the stranger to breathe its pure and genial air, and it is seldom before the latter hour that the firmament becomes obscured and the rains fall. With the exception of some little humidity in the atmosphere, no other inconvenience is experienced than the obligation to spend the evenings at home, an imprisonment only compulsory upon the ladies.

By the middle of **October** the north winds begin to blow, sweeping along with them the newly formed clouds, accompanied in their retreat as in their entry by electrical explosions, and some-

times by slight shocks of earthquake. In the months of November and December, these winds blow with considerable force; and some days in the latter month are comparatively cold. Small portions of snow fall on the tops of the highest mountains, and sufficient ice is congealed to supply the city for a few months.

Earthquakes though not unfrequent, do not seem to possess now that destructive force in this region, which we are told they exercised in former times. The principal ones that have affected the city, are thus described by Juarros. He informs us, that the first of importance on record, took place on the morning of the 11th September 1541. "It had rained incessantly and with great violence on the three preceding days, particularly on the night of the 10th, when the water descended more like the torrent of a cataract than rain; the fury of the wind, the incessant appalling lightning, and dreadful thunder, were indescribable. The general terror was increased by irruptions from the volcano to such a degree, that in this combination of horrors, the inhabitants imagined the final destruction of the world was at hand. At 2 o'clock on the morning of the 11th, the vibrations of the earth were so violent, that the people were unable to stand. The shocks were accompanied by a terrible subterraneous noise, which spread universal dismay. Shortly after-

wards an immense torrent of water rushed down from the summit of the mountain, forcing away with it enormous fragments of rocks and large trees, which descending upon the town overwhelmed and destroyed almost all the houses, and buried a great number of the inhabitants under the ruins. When day dawned on the 11th, those who had escaped unhurt from the scourge, rendered all the assistance in their power to their less fortunate neighbours, who were maimed or wounded. They collected the bodies of the dead, and in the evening buried them. To commemorate this calamity, a fast was annually held on the day for twenty years afterwards.

On the 23d of December 1586, another very violent shock overthrew the old city; reducing the greater part of it to a heap of ruins, and burying under them many of the inhabitants. The earth shook with such violence, that the tops of high ridges were torn off, and deep chasms formed in various parts of the level ground.

The third commenced on the 18th of February 1651, about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, when a most extraordinary subterranean noise was heard, and immediately followed by three violent shocks, at short intervals from each other, which threw down many buildings, and damaged others. The tiles from the roofs of the houses, were dispersed in all directions, like light straws by a gust of

wind. The bells of the churches were rung by the vibrations, masses of rock were detached from the mountains, wild beasts were so terrified that losing their natural instinct, they quitted their retreats, and sought shelter from the habitations of men.

A fourth occurred on the night of August 27th 1717, when the neighbouring volcano began to emit flames, which continued with slight shocks of earthquake, until the 28th, when they increased with great violence. The inhabitants became much alarmed, images of saints were carried in procession, public prayers were put up day by day, but they still continued; at last on the night of September 29th, the fate of Guatimala appeared to be decided, and inevitable destruction seemed to be at hand. Great was the ruin among the public edifices, many of the houses were thrown down, and all that remained were dreadfully injured. But the greatest devastation was seen in the churches. The inhabitants fled to the adjacent villages, and did not return till the shocks had ceased for some time, when they began to rebuild and repair their dwellings.

After several other shocks at different times, which effected various degrees of injury, such as the one of 1751, the one of 1757, called the earthquake of St. Francis, and that of 1765, which spread devastation over the province of

Chiquimula, came the one of 1773, which is thus described. "The year 1773 was the most melancholy epoch in the annals of this metropolis; it was then destroyed, and, as the capital, rose no more from its ruins. In the month of May some few slight shocks were perceived, and on the 11th of June a very violent one took place. Its duration was considerable, many houses and churches were much injured; during the whole of the night the shocks were repeated at short intervals, and for some days afterwards with less frequency. About 4 o'clock, in the afternoon of July 29th, a tremendous vibration was felt, and shortly afterwards began the dreadful convulsion, that decided the fate of this unfortunate city. It is difficult even for those who were witnesses of this dreadful catastrophe, to describe its character or the variety of its undulation; so entirely did terror, and the apprehension of immediate annihilation, absorb all powers of reflection. For several days these shocks continued, and sometimes in such quick succession that many took place in the short space of fifteen minutes. On the 17th of September there was another, which threw down most of the buildings that had been damaged on the 9th of July; and on the 13th of December one still more violent terminated the work of destruction." Since then, nothing approaching in violence to any of those which have

been described, has been experienced, and the new city has hitherto remained uninjured.

During our stay at Guatemala, one of the most powerful which has happened for many years, occurred. About one o'clock in the morning we were awoke from sleep by a loud rumbling noise in the bowels of the earth, not unlike the rattling of heavy carriages furiously driven along the pavement. This lasted for about three minutes, and was succeeded by a violent heaving of the ground, causing a sensation somewhat like the rolling of a ship at sea. This motion was not probably of more than two or three minutes continuance, and at its conclusion was followed by a shaking similar to that produced by the motion of a steam-engine. At the first alarm most of the inhabitants sprang from their beds, and the more devout commenced recitations to the virgin. Candles were lighted and placed before the images of the saints, and sleep was banished from most eyes. The whole could not continue more than from six to seven minutes, although the fears of many led them to suppose it of much longer duration. Its effects proved disastrous in the southern provinces, from whence it proceeded, overthrowing or injuring both churches and houses in its course; but with the exception of the fall of one building about a mile from the



city, it did not do any damage in the immediate neighbourhood.

This temperate climate is as salubrious as it is agreeable. No epidemic at any period of the year, sweeps off its inhabitants; and with the exception of those "common ills which flesh is heir to," it is free from every pestilential scourge. The few cases of fever which at times make their appearance, are brought by individuals who have contracted them on the coast. Diarrhœa sometimes attacks Europeans on their first arrival, but this seldom acts so powerfully as to produce dangerous consequences. It is generally attributed to some peculiar properties in the water.

Judging by the physical and moral character of the different nations of the world, it would seem that variable climates, subject to a fervent but ephemeral heat, and succeeded in other parts of the year, by a rigorous yet transient cold, are best suited to draw forth the energies of the mind of man, and to give force and vigour to his body. This hypothesis receives additional confirmation from the character, not only of the aboriginal inhabitants, but also of the descendants of the European settlers. The unvarying equability of temperature enjoyed in this favoured land, seems to induce a debility alike injurious both to the body and mind. The weakness of

the Indian population, although certainly exaggerated by Dr. Robertson, is yet considerable, and accompanied by a pusillanimity of character unusual among savages. The distinguishing characteristic of the creoles, as a whole, may be said to be mildness and inertness, while all the operations of government are marked by a want of energy truly surprising. The females marry early, and are old at forty: and the men at fifty-five exhibit a degree of bodily and mental weakness equal to what we expect at seventy in European countries.

According to the native historian before alluded to, the old city must have been subject to pestilential distempers. The account he gives of one which he says swept away, in three months, one tenth of the inhabitants, is curious, but so vague in its details as to make one almost doubt its authenticity. It happened in the year 1686. He says: "Some of the inhabitants died suddenly, others expired under the most acute pains of the head, heart, and bowels. No remedy was discovered that could check its destructive progress, although many of the deceased were opened to endeavour by that means to come at the cause of the disorder. So great was the number of the infected, that there was not a sufficient number of priests to administer the religious rites—the bells were no longer tolled for the dead indi-

vidually, and the corpses were buried "en masse" in a common grave. This disease appears to have disappeared independently of human means, and the credit of its removal is given to a miraculous interposition of the Virgin. She had been publicly solicited to interpose for them during three days, and her image during that time had been carried in procession. On the last day, about two in the afternoon, the face of the sacred effigy was discovered to be in a state of profuse perspiration for a long time. This prodigy was immediately certified by two notaries who were present, and from that day the pestilence ceased, and the sick recovered.

The ravages of small-pox have at various times spread desolation through the city, and though considerably checked by vaccination, it still occasionally devastates. This distemper is said to have been introduced into Mexico in 1520, by a negro slave of Narvaez, one of the conquerors, when it carried off one half of its inhabitants, and among others the Sovereign.

It first appeared in Guatemala in 1733, when it swept away in one month 1500 persons. From that time until 1780, it does not seem to have shown itself; but at this last period it again raged with destructive malignity. We are told "that the infected might not die without the administration of the Sacrament, the viaticum

was carried] from all the" parish churches, and also from those of the regular religious orders. The dead were not permitted to be interred in the churches, both on account of numbers, and because the decomposition of bodies in a state of such virulent contagion, might cause injury to survivors: three cemeteries without the city were therefore consecrated for their sepulture." Inoculation was now, for the first time, practised in Guatemala, with the most complete success; for although so many perished of the contagion, scarcely one of those who were inoculated died. At various intervals, however, it still made its appearance, and vaccination was early introduced.

In the year 1815, a pamphlet was published, by order of the Spanish government, explaining in familiar language, the symptoms of the disease; giving rules for diet, recommending suitable medicines, and strictly forbidding inoculation. It appeals very forcibly to the various orders of the clergy, urging them in their respective flocks, to use every effort for its alleviation, and especially to promote, by every means in their power, general vaccination. A fine bust of Jenner adorns one of the principal fountains, and serves to keep in remembrance the valuable discovery of which he was the author. Since the revolution, the propriety of providing a supply of virgin matter

has been brought before Congress, and like every thing else, been discussed, agreed to, and neglected. Before I left Guatemala, I delivered to each of their medical men portions of matter, from the National Vaccine Institution of England, hermetically sealed, and accompanied them with exact directions as to the best mode of preserving a constant supply ; but such is their ignorance and carelessness, that it is highly probable the greater part of it will be wasted.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Suburbs,—Villages,—Bee-hives,—Cochineal Plantations,—Grazing Farms,—Bathing Places,—Trip to Antigua, or old Guatemala.*

To the beauty of the environs, and the majestic character of the neighbouring scenery, rather than to any attraction which the city itself possesses, must be attributed that peculiar charm which compels the stranger to admire Guatemala, and impresses his mind even after leaving it, with the recollection of its loveliness and grandeur. The suburbs, in every direction, abound with pleasing walks, some leading to the hills of Carmen and Calvary, where chapels, called hermitages, are erected; and others, to the different Indian villages by which the city is surrounded. The adjoining country, for two or three leagues, affords numerous beautiful rides, and probably a greater variety of magnificent scenery may be found here, within the circumference of a few miles, than in the neighbourhood of any other city in either hemisphere.

One of the most agreeable pedestrian excursions is to Jocotonango, a village about a mile

distant. On the outside of the town, a fine avenue of trees leads into fields nearly isolated from the surrounding country, by stupendous barrancas, and surrounded in the distance, by a chain of mountains and volcanoes, over the tops of which an immense mantle of dark clouds lies almost perpetually stretched. On a fine evening, these fields are to be seen thickly studded with small parties, reclined upon the grass; some enjoying the cool breeze, and others listlessly gazing upon the majestic prospect. Close by is the village, which consists of a few small houses, a number of Indian huts, and a square or plaza, ornamented by a fine old fountain, which stands in the middle.

Once a year, this spot becomes the busy scene of rustic festivity, by the influx of visitants at the annual fair, which commences on the 14th of August, and lasts fifteen days. The first of these is appropriated to the sale of mules and horses, of which an immense variety are exhibited. The second is the great feast, and devoted to amusement. The middle of the plaza is then occupied by a multitude of Dulce women, who, squatted on the ground, are peeping through their black mantillas, and recommending the various preserved fruits and sweetmeats which they have for sale; a few covered stalls, with toys and ornaments, are interspersed among the crowd,

and numerous benches ranged around the square, are occupied by hundreds of *Señoritas*, glittering in all the tints of the rainbow, and differing not less in the colour of their skin than their vestments; gold and spangles are scattered in profusion over splendid lace dresses, and plumes of feathers bend over features of every order, from the thick-lipped and flat-nosed negress to the pale and delicate countenance of the Spanish belle. Fans, adorned with gilded hearts and darts, are flourished and flitted with a tact that would not have disgraced the days of Addison; and all the artillery of Cupid is directed at the crowds of spectators who parade on foot, or prance by on horseback, in order to exhibit their equestrian skill. This diversified scene is, to a stranger, both novel and diverting.

About two leagues to the S. E. the village of Pinula formerly attracted attention from its possessing a kind of seminary for young girls, who were educated free of expense, and maintained themselves by the productions of their gardens and bee-hives. The building which they inhabited appears very similar to a convent, and is now in a neglected state. Scarcely any pupils are to be found within its walls, and this once famed establishment, although sanctioned by royalty, is all but extinct.



The bee-hives used here are so different both in shape and construction to ours, that a slight description of them may be interesting. In form they are cylindrical, have about three feet in length, and nearly a foot in diameter, and are generally made of wood, with circular doors at each end, the bee entering at a small opening in the middle, which is by its situation generally protected from the rain. The one we saw opened was merely a log of wood roughly hollowed out, with doors at each end. The honey was contained in small bags about two inches long, of which a double row was arranged on each side the hive; the centre contained small cells of comb for the young ones. During the clearing of the hive, the bees flew around the head of the man who was extracting the honey, but did not offer any injury. This species of bee either has no sting, or else possesses that property in too feeble a degree to be dangerous. The honey has an agreeable scent, is much softer, and in taste not so pleasant as that of the European insect.

At short distances from the city many of the inhabitants have *nopaleras* or cochineal plantations, to which they pay considerable attention. These consist of a certain quantity of ground, carefully fenced in, and planted with parallel rows of prickly pear plants, (the *Cactus cochenillifer*,) or common Indian fig. Directly after

the rains have ceased, the \**insects* are sown upon the plant. Twelve or fourteen of these are collected from the parent with a feather, and enclosed all together in a small bag of the maize leaf, left open, and pinned with a thorn to the leaf of the cactus. Seven or eight of these bags are placed on different leaves of the same plant. In a short time the insects begin to breed in the bags, and the young ones crawl out upon the plant. As they grow, they gradually cover themselves with a mantle of white paste, which protects them from injury by the weather, and in the course of three months, they are ready for gathering. This is done by scraping the leaf, and after a sufficient number have been reserved for seed, the rest are either placed upon tins in a large oven, or thrown into hot water. When dried they assume the appearance of small grains, and are ready for sale. A second crop is then sown, and in three months a second harvest is reaped, after which the seed is preserved by covering the plant till the rainy season is passed. After four or five years the cactus decays from

\* The *coccus*, a genus of insects of the *hemipterous* order. *Generic Character*.—*Snout*, seated in the breast.—*Antenna* filiform.—*Abdomen* bristly behind.—*Wings* two, erect in the male, but without poisers. Several of the species when dried, produce a colouring matter, but the *coccus* cacti is the best fitted for this purpose. The female of this insect is the true cochineal of the shops, which is well known for its great use in dyeing and painting. Dried, pounded, and prepared, the colour is sold under the name of carmine.—*Crabbe's Technological Dictionary*.

the quantity of nourishment drawn from it by the insects, and it is then necessary to root them up and plant fresh ones.

The cultivation of this insect was not commenced in Guatemala till the year 1821, and so rapid has been its progress that it is estimated the harvest of the present year will produce 90,000 pounds weight.

The “*haciendas de ganados*” or grazing farms, are generally several leagues distant. Some of them are very valuable possessions, having good houses connected with the farms, and very numerous herds, but being generally left to the direction of *mayor-domos* or foremen, they are mostly neglected. The land is so good, and the climate so favourable, that the care and management, which to an English farmer is of the last importance, can here readily be dispensed with; and nobody in Guatemala thinks of taking more trouble than is absolutely necessary.

Some of the wealthy Spaniards were formerly in the habit of expending very considerable sums of money upon these estates, uniting to the grazing department, sugar plantations, and of late cochineal gardens. One of the most beautiful of this description, about a league and a half from the city, strikingly exhibits the thoughtless profusion with which money was wasted upon such undertakings. It is situated upon the side of one

of the mountains, and commands a fine prospect of the plain of Guatemala, the city, the mountains, and the different Indian villages, scattered about them, forming a panoramic view from this situation remarkably interesting. The house and walks are elevated and laid out in the Italian style. Three stone terraces rise one above another, and a very fine archway adorns the entrance to the outer court. An immense aqueduct on the upper terrace supplies several stone reservoirs, and affords a sufficient quantity of water, both for the sugar mill on the second terrace, and for the irrigation of the whole of the land. Below and all around the buildings, are sugar plantations, orange and lime groves, nopales separated by hedge rows of plantain trees, and small Indian huts for the people employed on the estate. The works and edifices alone are said to have cost the original contriver £20,000 sterling; but in so careless a manner are these things executed, that the aqueduct is led through other estates, and is liable at any time to be cut off. This delightful spot is now in the hands of a company of individuals, who leave it to the care of an agent, who in his turn commends it to the care of nature. Neglect appears in every branch, half the produce is wasted, and the buildings are allowed to fall into decay.

The village of San Juan de Amatitan, and the town of Escuintla may be termed the fashionable bathing places of Guatemala. The former is situated near the lake of the same name, and has a fine river flowing near it, the waters of which are supposed to be medicinal. The latter which is by far the most frequented, although fifteen leagues distant, possesses a similar stream in which the visitors bathe. This place is infested by vermin of every description, the houses are wretched and the accommodations miserable; the climate is excessively hot, and the town so destitute of every comfort, that even chairs must be brought from Guatemala by the fanciful mortals who arrive for the benefit of their health. In the months of January and February the old and the young, the grave and the gay flock hither to derive as they imagine new vigour from the profuse perspiration they experience, and the bracing influence of this wonder-working water. It is amusing to observe how universally prejudice and fashion lead the world in chains; and one can scarcely restrain a smile at the remembrance that four months after the return of the good citizens of Guatemala, from their beloved Escuintla, the enlightened fashionables of Grosvenor square will be deserting country seats, furnished with every luxury, to crowd themselves into dirty garrets at the "adorable Brighton."

The Antigua or old Guatemala—and the villages lying between it and the capital, may with propriety be included in this slight sketch of the surrounding country :—let us therefore at once set out for that city. Leaving Guatemala through the southern barrier, we proceed across the plain for about three leagues, when we arrive at the village of Mixco, situated on the declivity of a mountain, which commands a fine view of the valley, the mountains enclosing it, the city and its suburbs. This village is well populated and has a good church, its inhabitants are chiefly potters and carriers.

From hence the ascent is rocky and steep, and the road continues rough and irregular till we arrive at the village of San Lucas about three leagues further. This place is termed by old Tomas Gage an English friar, who about a century ago published a tour through Mexico and Guatemala, the granary of the capital, since it was found practicable to keep corn in good condition here, much longer than in the old city. In the present day however, it has no claim to this honourable title. The cura of this village possesses probably more botanical information than any other native of the republic. He has taken considerable pains in the cultivation of European fruits and vegetables, and had at one period near a thousand different plants in his

garden. When we visited this spot, it was sadly overgrown with weeds, and appeared greatly neglected, which was attributed by the owner to a long illness from which he had but just recovered, and which had rendered him incapable of superintending it. We found here strawberries, olives, bergamot pears, figs, asparagus, besides a variety of plants and flowers he had received from Europe. This priest appeared to be a very intelligent man, had a tolerable good library, and had evinced both his patriotism and liberality in having had lessons prepared at his own expense for the establishment of a Lancasterian school.

From hence to the Antigua, a distance of three leagues, the road becomes tolerably level, and the scenery romantic. The mountains lie on each side, covered with verdure, and lined chiefly with stunted oaks, while the river which waters the old capital, rolls murmuring towards it at their feet. The view of the city from a distance, is highly pleasing: its situation is beautiful, and the plain on which it stands, very fertile. On approaching near to it, and entering the streets, the traveller is struck with the unique prospect which presents itself. Convents, churches, palaces, and public buildings of every description, stand before his eyes, all ruined and in great measure overgrown with moss: walls, with tremendous openings, and huge stones tottering as

it ready to fall upon the head of the passer-by, remain precisely as they did when, fifty years ago, the inhabitants fled from their vicinity, through fear of being swallowed up by their ruins. The very rubbish in many places, has not been removed, and such is the superstitious feeling of the lower orders, that they object to see any portion of the stones appropriated to what they deem unhallowed purposes. These buildings are many of them in a very superior style of architecture, far surpassing similar edifices in the new capital. In the streets near the market-place, the houses have been mostly repaired, or rebuilt; but in some of the outer ones, bare walls, covered with moss, still meet the eye in every direction.

The suburbs constitute one vast garden, filled with vegetables, for the supply of both the cities, or covered with the nopal for the cultivation of the cochineal insect, of which a considerable quantity is annually produced. These gardens are mostly well directed, and regularly irrigated. In the vicinity, are some water-mills, for grinding flour: but the machinery is wretchedly coarse. The number of inhabitants is now estimated at near 16,000, employed chiefly in agriculture, and the streets and plaza are again thronged with a noisy multitude, equally forgetful of the fearful past, and careless of the future.



## PART III.

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HISTORY OF THE REVOLUTION,—TRADE AND COMMERCE,—SKETCH OF NATURAL HISTORY, &c.—ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS.

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### CHAPTER I.

*State of Guatemala before the Revolution,—Causes which produced that event,—Declaration of Independence,—Junction with Mexico,—General Congress,—Publication of the Constitution,—Struggle between the Aristocracy and the People,—War of San Salvador.*

THE history of revolutions, in their consequences the most beneficial to our species, has generally been melancholy. The struggles of passion and conflicting interests have too often disfigured the fair form which liberty assumed at the outset; and the bright halo which true patriotism threw around her head as she emerged from obscurity, has speedily been lost amid “shadows, clouds, and darkness.” A new generation.

profiting both by the struggles and errors of their fathers, have been left to complete the work, and to reap the harvest. But the glory of the enterprise does not rest with them. It belongs to the rough and restless spirits, who, wearied by oppression, first rose and shook themselves for the conflict; it is the crown of those who first succeeded in planting the lever, and overthrowing the strong fortresses of tyranny, although themselves perished in the ruins.

It is interesting to watch the slow and silent steps by which men arrive at that height of daring which induces them to risk every thing for freedom; and to observe, as far as possible, the first dawns of that love of liberty, which "growing with their growth, and strengthening with their strength," becomes the ruling passion, till, like the rod of the prophet, it swallows up every other.

The Centro-American character would seem of all others, the least susceptible of violent impressions. Mild almost to effeminacy, and inert in the extreme,—to a superficial eye, it would seem the work of ages to awaken them to exertion, or even to make their breasts glow with any thing like patriotic ardour. That very much remains to be done on this point is undoubted, but considering the character of the people, and the limited space of time which has elapsed since the

revolution, it should rather excite surprise that so much has been accomplished.

It is difficult to form a correct idea of the state of Guatemala as a colony of Spain. From the period of the conquest until it declared its independence, the most profound tranquillity had reigned within its borders. The Indian and coloured population submitted themselves entirely to the will of the whites, who were occupied in amassing fortunes with ease and quietness. A slavish superstition sealed the eyes and bound in chains the very thoughts of all parties, and the country peacefully enjoyed the lethargic calm which such opiates invariably produce.

At this period, (including up to the close of the last century) the country under the appellation of the Kingdom of Guatemala, was governed by a Captain-General, appointed by the court of Spain, and a Royal Audiencia or Prætorial Court, whose jurisdiction extended from  $8^{\circ}$  to  $17^{\circ}$  north latitude, and from  $82^{\circ}$  to  $95^{\circ}$  west longitude, comprising an extent of surface computed at 26,152 square leagues, with a population of about 1,200,000 souls, giving about forty-six inhabitants to the square league.\* The kingdom was again subdivided into fifteen provinces; five situated on

\* Humboldt's Political Essay, vol. iv. p. 322.

the shores of the Atlantic: five on the Pacific; and five in the interior. These were governed by inferior officers, who reported to the *audiencia*. Spiritual affairs were under the direction of the archbishop of Guatemala and three suffragans. The ecclesiastical division of the country consisted of four bishoprics, and comprised two hundred and twenty curacies: twenty-three collected curacies of regulars; seven hundred and fifty-nine parochial churches; and four establishments for the conversion of infidels. A military force could scarcely be said to have existence; not more than from thirty to fifty soldiers being required for the internal security of the kingdom.

Such was the state of things in Guatemala when the present century dawned upon its sons, a century pregnant with events more important perhaps to a succeeding than the present generation. About this period the contraband trade with the English settlers in the bay of Honduras began rapidly to increase, and to assume the shape of regular commerce. The young and enterprising eagerly entered into a traffic which not only produced considerable profit, but as it were opened before their eyes a new world. Knowledge, and a fresh thirst for it, entered with their merchandise, and books of various descriptions clandestinely found their way into the very heart of the isthmus.

Undeceived in their impression that Spain was the *first* empire of the world, and that the other powers of Europe were tributary to her, they became indignant at the deception, and soon learned to despise a power they had hitherto blindly revered.

New opinions like these soon displayed themselves, and although the hand of power smothered the flame, it could not extinguish the internal fire, which stole along, enlarging its boundaries on every side, until it had formed no inconsiderable mass of combustible matter, ready for ignition. But hitherto there had been little ground of complaint. Tyrannical as was the colonial system of Spain, its administration was generally mild, and at so great a distance from the seat of power, the most disagreeable edicts were easily evaded. The wealthier families, some of whom had purchased patents of nobility, assumed the title of noblesse, and by their attentions and flatteries gained the ear of the Viceroy, through whom they governed in their own way, without fear of control. These engrossed every office, from the highest to the lowest. Nothing was too high to escape their grasp, or too low to be beneath their notice. About the time of the revolution, a list was published of the sixty-four offices to which salaries were annexed

by the court of Spain, varying from fifty to six thousand dollars, the whole of which amounting to near ninety thousand dollars annually, were held by individuals forming, by intermarriages, one sole family; of these, nearly all were Americans by birth, but the sons of European Spaniards. In every office, brothers succeeded to brothers, nephews to uncles, relations to relations. Even in the Chamber of Commerce, the same spirit of family was all powerful. In the Royal Cedula, for its formation in 1793, the thirty-ninth article nominates the thirty individuals of whom it is to be composed; and here too the same names only are to be found; so that with the exception of this body, who may be termed the aristocracy, the Guatimalians saw themselves irrevocably shut out from every office, either of honour or profit.

✓ About the years 1803 and 4, commenced that plague in the public purse of Spain which is still raging and threatening destruction to the empire. The colonies were resorted to, and a voluntary subscription required. On the part of Guatemala, this was supplied most liberally, the citizens vying with each other in loyalty towards the mother country. Contribution after contribution was the only recompense the Americans received for this act of generosity, and the coun-

try groaning under an unjust and excessive taxation, began to feel itself in hands as insatiable as the grave, which never says "it is enough." The same zeal which had been exerted to raise money, under every form of impost, was also exercised to suppress the progress of literature and science, and societies which only a few years before had received the royal sanction, were ordered to suspend their functions. Such flagrant acts of despotism as these, prepared the minds of the people for a change, which would have taken place sooner had not the indolence and apathy of the population opposed a powerful obstacle to any attempt of the kind. From the beginning of 1812, feverish symptoms had manifested themselves in some of the provinces, and in the year 1815, a slight insurrection took place, in Leon; but it was immediately suppressed, and the leaders sent to Spain. From the years 1816 to 1819, a discontented feeling at various times, displayed itself, and secret meetings began to be held, in order to arrange plans for improving a favourable opportunity of declaring Guatemala independent of old Spain.

While these events were taking place in Guatemala, the flame of independence had broke forth in more than one quarter of the new world; and, by the year 1821 the fate of Mexico was decided. Every post brought intelligence of the proceed-

ings of the patriots in New Spain, and the fermentation which such intelligence naturally produced on the minds of the people, became universal. In this extremity, arrived Gavino Gainza, appointed by the Cortes of Spain, bringing with him the news of the recent political changes in the peninsula, and the establishment of the constitution.

Invitations now poured in from Ciudad Real, and other quarters; the leading families and most influential members of the church met together: and after various private meetings, in which Gainza took a part, they publicly proclaimed the independence on the fifteenth of September, 1821, amid the shouts of the populace. A proclamation was then issued, and a resolution entered into to call a general congress, for the first of March, 1822; in the mean time forming a provisional government, of which Gainza should be President, consisting of a council composed of individuals belonging to the different provinces.

The proclamation which bore the name of Gainza and was addressed to the citizens of Guatemala was to the following effect:—"Other governments speak of plans adopted or provisions taken by themselves for the regulation of the people they govern; the government of Guatemala speaks to you citizens of those things which yourselves have desired, of that which yourselves have proclaimed. Since the year 1810, the two Ame-



ricas southern and northern, have bestirred themselves, have begun to defend their rights, and have commenced the cry of liberty and independence. Guatemala placed in the midst of either, was a tranquil spectator of both; her sons heard with pleasure the cries, and observed with joy the steps of those whom they have always considered brethren, and if they did not express with the lip the sentiments of their hearts, they were nevertheless Americans, loving what she loved, and desiring what she panted for. In New Spain the cry of Independence resounded and its echoes were heard in Guatemala, and desires began to burn which can never be extinguished. Still the peaceful sons of Guatemala remained tranquil, hoping that the convulsions of Mexico would find a speedy termination. For months they waited, and the energy of their feelings was continually on the increase, until repeated intelligence rendered it necessary that steps should be taken in Guatemala; and communications having been made to the provinces, the fifteenth was appointed for a general meeting in the palace. On that day the archbishop, the deputies appointed by him, the captain general, the venerable dean, and the ecclesiastical court, the consulado, the college of lawyers, the military and civil chiefs, the prelates and the public functionaries united.

The people were not indifferent to a subject which was their own. They assembled in front of the palace, in the market place and in the streets, manifesting the moderation which has ever distinguished them. At this meeting some without opposing the independence wished to wait the final struggle in Mexico, but a low murmur indicated disapprobation; and when the prelates and others declared that the voice of Guatemala was one with America, and that it was necessary immediately to attend to their wishes, a general shout declared the unity of opinion; but when it was added that the formation of the new government should be the work of the representatives of the people, the loudest acclamations unequivocally testified the general joy. Send then, citizens, your deputies and representatives to the capital, that the will of the provinces may be manifested to all the world; and decree a constitution which shall elevate you to that felicity, which the geographical situation of your soil promises. This is the desire of the authorities. These are the sentiments of Guatemala. If in other countries, and at other times, union is strength, in the present it is especially necessary. Elect then deputies worthy of the people they have to represent. Every thing must be your work. Think of the important business you have

in hand. For my part I swear this day, and when the constitution shall be formed will again swear to be faithful to America, and to sustain her rights."

This was followed by a second manifesto to the provinces, inviting them to elect representatives in the proportion of one for every fifteen thousand inhabitants, not excluding the coloured population from the rights of citizenship; and assuring them, that until this congress should meet, and form the basis of a constitution, no change should take place in the authorities,—and that it should be a fundamental principle to keep the Catholic religion unchanged, and to preserve that pious spirit for which Guatemala had always been distinguished. To these notices were added, a signification of the intention to coin a medal in celebration of the event, and to hold a solemn mass. This paper bears the date of the sixteenth, and is also signed by Gainza.

That the congress was called together in good faith there is no doubt, notwithstanding that subsequent events prevented its union. Soon after the publication of these proclamations, Iturbide ascended the throne of Mexico, and the influence which this event had on the early destinies of Guatemala are detailed in a third manifesto by Gainza, bearing date January 5th 1822. He begins by stating that when on the memorable

fifteenth of September, the capital proclaimed its glorious independence, the government convoked the representatives of the people to decide, "whether the independence should be general and absolute, and if so what form of government should be erected." At that time he says they knew not that the hero and liberator of the empire had ascended the august throne, and therefore could not allude to union with a government whose installation might be frustrated by the vicissitudes of human events; that at the time of the independence, the most delightful unity prevailed, but that since then the seeds of discord had been scattered, and provinces which had first declared themselves one with Guatemala had since united themselves to Mexico;—that it had been the earnest wish of the temporary junta to leave the question of union to be decided by the representatives of the people when they should meet, but that as three of the provinces, (Honduras, Costa Rica and Chiapa) had declared themselves for the union, there were no longer elements for a distinct and separate government. He then urges them to apply themselves to improving the condition of the country and to live in peace and concord. After the publication of this paper Gainza retired to Mexico, where he was taken ill and soon after died.

Against these proceedings the province of San Salvador strongly protested, and immediately formed a provisional government of its own.

This province, the richest in the kingdom, had always ranked next in importance to Guatemala, and between the two states a feeling of jealousy amounting to enmity, had long existed. It had been the first to receive liberal ideas, and had cherished them with an enthusiasm unknown in the other provinces, and now bitterly exclaimed against the aristocracy of Guatemala, by whom it considered itself betrayed. Arms were immediately resorted to, and the government of Guatemala fearing an attack, sent troops to suppress them. This army attacked San Salvador on the third of June, but were instantly repulsed and driven back. In this emergency they applied to General Filisola, who with a body of Mexican troops, was at this time in Ciudad Real. On his arrival in Guatemala he was reinforced with the troops of the province, and marched for San Salvador, on the first of October, 1822, at this time defended by a considerable army under the command of Arcé, the present president of the federation. Filisola lay before the city four months, and on the seventh of February, 1823, took it without much bloodshed. But arms cannot subdue opinion. Filisola soon found that the junction was so unpopular as to render it impossible to be maintained. A proclamation bearing

his name, appeared on the twenty-ninth of March, 1823, reconvoking the general congress, and on the twenty-fourth of June following, this body, for the first time assembled, and took the name of Constituent Assembly. To this congress each of the states sent deputies with the exception of Chiapa and Nicaragua. The former remained firm in its adherence to Mexico, and the latter, torn to pieces by civil dissensions, was in too distracted a state to make the election. These disturbances were however quelled by the troops from San Salvador, and the deputies of Nicaragua joined the congress. One of the first acts of the constituent assembly after the nomination of an executive, was to publish a decree, declaring "these provinces independent of Spain, Mexico, and every other power, either of the old or new world." This decree is dated July 1, 1823.

Filisola at this period was appointed Commandant General of the army and Geñe Politico. Soon after this appointment however he returned to Mexico, and the troops which had accompanied him from Ciudad Real were withdrawn at the same time. The congress, which now found itself completely uncontrolled, published on the 17th of December, the basis of its future constitution, and declared Guatemala a Federal Republic, comprising five states, joined together under the denomination of the United Provinces of Central America, viz.

### I. Guatemala, consisting of 13 Departments—Capital Guatemala.

DEPARTMENTS.	No. of Towns and Villages.	DEPARTMENTS.	No. of Towns and Villages.
1. Sacatepequez,	13	3. Escuintla,	12
2. Chimaltenango,	11	9. Chiquimula,	3
3. Sololá,	11	10. San Agustín,	3
4. Totonicapán,	4	11. Vera Paz,	5
5. Güegüetango,	3	12. Salamá,	7
6. Quezaltenango,	7	13. Peten,	9
7. Suchitepequez,	6		

*Comprises 114 Towns and Villages—Population computed at 700,000.*

### II. Salvador, consisting of 4 Departments—Capital San Salvador.

DEPARTMENTS.	No. of Towns and Villages.	DEPARTMENTS.	No. of Towns and Villages.
1. San Salvador,	23	3. San Miguel,	10
2. Sonzonate,	14	4. San Vicente,	3

*Comprises 55 Towns and Villages—Population computed at 350,000.*

### III. Honduras consisting of 12 Departments—Capital Comayagua.

DEPARTMENTS	No. of Towns and Villages	DEPARTMENTS.	No. of Towns and Villages.
1. Comayagua,	6	7. Gracias,	5
2. Tegucigalpa,	5	8. Llanos,	5
3. Choluteca,	4	9. Santa Barbara,	6
4. Nacaomi,	4	10. Truxillo,	2
5. Cantarranas,	4	11. Lloro,	2
6. Juticalpa,	3	12. Segovia,	11

*Comprises 57 Towns and Villages—Population computed at 200,000.*

### IV. Nicaragua, consisting of 3 Departments—Capital Leon.

DEPARTMENTS.	No. of Towns and Villages.	DEPARTMENTS.	No. of Towns and Villages.
1. Leon,	7	5. Subtiava,	5
2. Granada,	10	6. Masaia,	12
3. Managua,	4	7. Nicaragua,	6
4. Realejo,	4	3. Matagalpa,	5

*Comprises 53 Towns and Villages—Population computed at 200,000.*

## V. Costarica, consisting of 8 Departments—Capital San Jose.

DEPARTMENTS.	No of Towns and Villages.	DEPARTMENTS.	No of Towns and Villages.
1. San Jose.	3	5. Isean.	2
2. Cartago.	5	6. Alajuela.	1
3. Ujarras.	3	7. Eredia.	2
4. Boruca.	2	8. Bagases.	3

*Comprises 21 Towns and Villages—Population computed at 50,000.*

These five states unitedly contain about 22,000 square leagues of territory, forming, in shape, a triangular polygon; its point lying in the province of Panama, and its base in the line that separates it from New Spain. They are bounded north by the Atlantic, south and south-west by the Pacific, south-east by the province of Veraguas, and west and north-east by Mexico, and comprise a population of about a million and a half. These by their representatives, expressed their determination to be governed on the principles of federal republicanism, and the basis of their constitution is declared to be in accordance with those principles. It ordains the *legislative* power to reside.

I. In a *Federal Congress*, composed of representatives elected by the people; with whom it shall rest to make war and peace, to direct the army, the mint, and the general administration of the government.

II. In a *Senate*, composed of two senators popularly elected by each state: whose privilege it



shall be to sanction the acts of the federal congress; to counsel the executive on important cases, to nominate the individuals employed by the federation, and to watch over their conduct. It declares that the *executive* power shall be vested

1. In a *President* popularly chosen, whose duty it shall be to enforce the laws, but on all important matters, previously to consult the senate;

2. In a *Vice President*, and

3. In a *Supreme Court of Justice*, which shall exercise the highest judicial power.

It decrees, that the internal affairs of each state shall be regulated by itself upon the following principles :

1. By an *Assembly of Deputies*, popularly elected, who shall form the laws, determine the expenses of administration, decree duties, and fix the military force, with consent of the federal congress.

2. By a *Council*, similarly chosen, whose privilege it shall be to give or withhold sanction to the laws, to counsel the executive power, and to nominate the individuals holding the higher offices of the state.

3. By a *Chief*, whose duty it shall be to direct the executive, to nominate the jefe politico of each department, and to dispose of the forces of the state.

4. By a *Vice Chief*. and

5. By a *Supreme Court of Judicature*. who shall administer justice according to the laws.

After these preliminaries the constituent assembly began to form a constitution. and in the mean time the different states were left to regulate their internal concerns. With the state of Guatemala the history of the revolution makes us familiar. The influence of the church and the aristocracy always proved pre-eminent: and after various struggles with the liberal party. it succeeded in establishing an executive considerably more moderate than the other states. These struggles however delayed the establishment of its government: and its constitution. as a state. was not decreed until the eleventh of October. 1825.

The province of Salvador. anciently called Cuscatlan or the land of riches. was conquered by Alvarado. in 1525. and its capital founded in 1528. This city. which now ranks second in the republic. contains a population of about 16.000 inhabitants. It is situated in  $13^{\circ} 36''$  north latitude. and  $89^{\circ} 46''$  west longitude. eight leagues distant from the Pacific. and is surrounded by hills and mountains covered with wood. and terminating on the north-east in a dormant volcano. Its climate although hot is healthy. and its inhabitants are distinguished as ardent lovers of liberty.

From the 'first hour' of the struggle, the prevalence of liberal opinions was evident, and from that period to the present it has invariably taken the lead. Undivided in sentiment, it decreed its constitution on the twelfth of June, 1824.

Honduras lies east and west, on the shores of the Atlantic, and is bounded by the bay of Honduras on the north, by Nicaragua on the south-east and east, by San Salvador on the south, and by the department of Chiquimula on the west. Its soil is mostly rugged and mountainous, and rich in metals. The low lands are humid and unhealthy, owing to the almost innumerable rivers by which they are watered, and the constant rains to which the province is subject. It is consequently thinly populated. Its capital Comayagua is situated on a beautiful plain in about  $13^{\circ} 50'$  north latitude, and  $88^{\circ} 46'$  west longitude, and is distant from Guatemala about 144 leagues. This state decreed its constitution on the eleventh of December, 1825.

Nicaragua is bounded on the north by the province of Honduras; on the east, by the Atlantic: on the south, by Costarica and the Pacific Ocean; and on the west, by Tegucigalpa, a department of Honduras. From west to east, it extends eighty-five leagues, and from north to south about seventy-five. Its capital, Leon, situated in  $12^{\circ} 20'$  north latitude, and  $86^{\circ} 16'$

west longitude, four leagues from the Pacific, and 183 leagues from Guatemala, was before the revolution, one of the most beautiful cities of the kingdom. From its local advantages, it promised to surpass the capital, and was rapidly advancing in prosperity when the flame of civil discord which had long been smothered, broke forth with unparalleled fury. Half the city soon became a heap of ruins, and the respectable inhabitants fled in terror from such a scene of devastation. Torn in pieces by these dissensions, it did not decree its constitution until the 8th of April, 1826. Ultra liberalism may be said to be the political temperament of this province, which still continues distracted and unsettled.

Costarica, which, notwithstanding its name is the poorest, and most destitute of all the provinces, extends 160 leagues from west to east, and about sixty leagues from north to south. Its climate is warm, but healthy, and its population very widely scattered. Cartago, the ancient\* capital, is situated in about 9° 10' north latitude, and 82° 46' west long. 400 leagues east, south-east, from Guatemala, thirty leagues from the Atlantic, and thirty from the Pacific. It has about 8000 inhabitants. This state decreed its constitution on the 21st of January, 1825.

\* The seat of government has for the present been removed to San José.

From the period of the publication of the basis on which the new government was to be founded, the constituent assembly continued its sittings, and on the twenty-second of November, 1824, presented its constitution. This document consists of two hundred and eleven articles, and is divided into sections and chapters.

**Article 1.** Declares the people of the Federal Republic of Central America sovereign and independent.

**Article 11.** States the religion of the republic to be that of the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church, to the exclusion of the public exercise of any other.

**Article 12.** Declares the republic to be a sacred asylum for every stranger, and the country of all those who wish to reside in its territory.

**Article 13.** Pronounces every man free in the republic, and declares he cannot be a slave who takes refuge under the laws, nor he a citizen who traffics in slaves.

**Articles 14 to 22.** Relate to the rights of citizenship.

**Articles 23 to 54.** Regulate the election of different officers.

**Articles 55 to 68.** Refer to the organization of the legislative, and declare the intention to build a Federal Capital as soon as circumstances will permit.

Articles 69 to 105. Define the powers of Congress, and regulate the promulgation of new laws.

Articles 106 to 151. Relate to the executive, and to the responsibility of the different authorities.

Articles 152 to 174. Secure individual liberty, oblige magistrates to examine accused persons within forty-eight hours, and to commit or set at liberty within twenty-four hours following.

Articles 175 to 211. Relate to the powers of the different states, and give regulations for the formation or admission of new ones.

About a month after this publication, the constituent assembly dissolved itself, with the intention of re-opening its sessions in the following February. At this period it again met and united with the senate and other constitutional bodies. The two candidates for the presidency were Arcé and José del Valle. The popular elections had terminated with a small majority for Valle; but on various pretexts which were at the time subjects of considerable controversy, the Congress decided that the majority was not absolute. In this case the constitution leaves the decision to that body, and it decided in favour of the former, who although a native of San Salvador, was esteemed less democratic than the latter. José del Valle and his friends protested against the decision, but were unable to get it reversed.

Del Valle himself is a man of considerable learning, (probably the only man meriting that title in the republic;) but unacquainted with the world, and destitute of that nerve which in the situation he aspired to is almost indispensable. Having studied books more than men, he is apt to be misled by dazzling theories, and having seen little of other countries, is ever disposed to overrate the importance of his own. But whatever be his deficiencies, nothing can palliate injustice.

During the sittings of this year, the discussions of Congress assumed a tone so moderate and liberal, as to reflect the highest honor upon its members. Plans the most beneficial to the republic were proposed and carried, and if they have hitherto proved abortive, it should be attributed rather to the influence of melancholy and uncontrollable events, than to any want of zeal in their projectors. If the republic has derived little practical benefit from their discussion, they have at least served the purpose of manifesting their good intentions.

The third session commenced on the first of March 1826, and from this period may be dated the commencement of that unhappy struggle, which has paralyzed the energies of the nation,—rendered the constitution a dead letter,—forced backward the march of civilization,—and superseded civil government by martial law.

The restless and intriguing spirit of the aristocracy and the church, soon obtained an undue influence in the councils of the Federation; and unable to brook the more liberal spirit of the state authorities and the Congress, they soon brought matters to an open rupture. The deputies from San Salvador withdrew, the Congress broke up, and war commenced between the Federation and the state of Guatemala. The struggle did not last long; the latter was obliged to yield, and Barrundia the chief of the state was arrested by the President. Flores the vice chief immediately assumed the executive power, but was soon obliged to remove the state authorities to San Martin, a neighbouring town. His power was not of long duration. At Quezaltenango, where he had laid a contribution on the church, he fell a victim to the fury of a superstitious mob, which, instigated by those who ought to be the promoters of peace, pursued him into the church whither he had fled for refuge; and, although the officiating priest held before him the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and appeared anxious to protect him, he was dragged from the pulpit in which he had concealed himself, and literally torn to pieces before the altar, the populace running through the streets and crying, "Long live Guatemala." "Death to the Congress."



After these events the reins of government were assumed by the aristocracy. Aycinena was installed chief of the state, on the first of March 1827, and the liberal party in the state of Guatemala were subdued.

It is only from the date of the period immediately preceding this act of violence, that we are able to form any correct idea of the resources of the Federation; since subsequent events have rendered later accounts impracticable. From the budget of the minister laid before the legislative assembly for the year 1825, we extract the following calculation of probable receipts and expenditure.

1825	DOLLARS.		DOLLARS.
Salaries of Officers, &c.	54,950	Customs & Maritime Duties,	200,000
Judicial Expenses,	14,450	Produce of Gunpowder, a }	8,000
Finance List,	113,684	federal Monopoly,	
War & Marine,	469,524	<i>Produce of Tobacco, a federal</i>	
		<i>Monopoly.</i>	
		State of Guatemala,	75,265
		do. Salvador,	31,467
		do. Leon,	77,127
		do. Comayagua,	27,643
		do. Costarica,	1,858
		Deficiency,	181,248
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	\$652,608		\$652,608

This deficiency was proposed to be met by contributions on each state, in the following proportions,

Guatemala, 51,092 6½	Nicaragua, 32,143 4½
Salvador, 67,336 1	Costarica 9,261 4½
Honduras, 21,413 7½	

A statement so vague as this, the assembly very properly refused to sanction, and re-

quired a more particular, and exact account of all the different branches of administration, including,

1. The state of the public resources during the two first years of the independence, and the means taken to improve them.

2. The probable expenses of the year entering.

3. An exact statement of the funds applied by the constituent assembly to the expenses of the federal government.

4. Means proposed for improving the resources of the federation, by a better system of collecting the present taxes, and creating new sources of revenue ; and,

5. On the establishment of public credit, by a foreign loan.

A report, in some measure meeting the wishes of the assembly, was accordingly presented in the month of March 1826. From it we learn, that among the earliest acts of the constituent assembly, was an order for the governments of the different states to separate the funds which belonged to the local administrations, from those of the nation ; to appoint a common treasury, and to demand exact accounts of the distribution of monies from the independence to that period. The commissioners, however, reported that this information could not be obtained, nor was it

possible to say what amount of money might have been received by the states. The federal government therefore, anxious to fulfil its duties, established custom houses in the different ports, and appointed officers to receive the rents of the nation. The government laments its inability to meet the just claims of many creditors, and states its desire to remedy these evils as speedily as possible. The low state of the finances is principally attributed to the quantity of goods clandestinely admitted, owing to the carelessness or corruption of the persons destined to prevent it. In Omoa and Truxillo, the civil force is stated to be altogether unequal to the protection of commerce; and on the banks, and at the mouths of the rivers Chamelecon, Ullua and Leanes, which disembogue themselves between these two places, many families we are told find support by this illicit traffic. To remedy in some degree this growing evil the report recommends the removal of the port of Yzabal to El Refugio, which point it is thought, would not only be more convenient for the transportation of goods to Gualan, but would considerably impede the proceedings of the smugglers.

To Realexo, Conchagua, Acajutla and La Libertad, on the south, and San Juan on the north, receivers of customs are said to have been appointed, but at that time the government had not

been able to find suitable individuals willing to fulfil the duties.

In the beginning of 1825, a part of the loan contracted in London was received, which was applied under the direction of the legislature. When this was expended, it became necessary to meet the current expenses with the only resources upon which they could regularly calculate, viz. the customs and the tobaccos. But these could not all be collected; Honduras, Nicaragua and San Salvador, having neglected to give in any accounts whatever although repeatedly required to do so, in consequence of which we are told the public funds still remain in a state of considerable embarrassment. The minister then adds, that the regulations of the assembly, for uniting the offices and diminishing the number of the employed, had not been carried into effect, owing to circumstances beyond the control of the government.

With regard to the calculated expenses of the coming year, we are informed that considerable anxiety has been felt to economise to the utmost,—that a republic is the cheapest form of government, and that the salaries of the public officers are lower in proportion, than in any other nation. The calculated expense is then stated to be as follows.

<i>Dollars.</i>		<i>Dollars.</i>	
President of the Republic	9,000	Supposed produce of duties, if collected on an improved plan	300,000
Vice President	3,000	Do. tobacco & gunpowder the two fedrl. monopolies	
Secretary of State	4,746	Loan	75,000
Salaries and expenses of ministers in foreign countries	125,950	Balance to be divided as a contingent among the different states	690,791
Assist. to Sec. of State	450		
Salaries of Magistrates	14,000		
Expenses connected with collecting of duties	12,600		
Do. of Post-office	8,738		
Do. connected with the sowing of Tobacco	115,950		
Do. with the manufacture of Gunpowder	17,300		
Salaries of two Ministers of Finance	10,660		
Do. Treasurer	5,460		
Do. Receivers of duties in the ports	17,600		
Pensions of individuals employed under the Spanish government	17,000		
Charitable Pensions	2,800		
Hospitals	10,500		
Expenses connected with the Commandants and Treasurers of the different Ports	25,000		
Secretary of Federal Cong.	3,150		
Secretary of the Senate	3,250		
Judges	7,500		
For the establishment and maintenance of the army and navy according to the plans of the Legislative Assembly	966,137		
	<u>\$1,380,791</u>		<u>\$1,380,791</u>

The report then refers to the national debt, which with interest, is stated to amount to two millions and a half of dollars; a sum chiefly borrowed by the captains-general of the court of Spain, in order to pay the contributions imposed by the mother country, and principally owing to different religious houses.

This statement, meagre and unsatisfactory as it is, merits attention as being the only attempt of

the kind ever made. It was as a matter of course, received by the assembly, laid on the table, and speedily forgotten. Since then things have moved on amidst the most inextricable confusion: each individual connected with the government securing to himself whatever may come within his grasp. The local revenue of the different states arises from the proceeds of the *alcavala*, a tax imposed on provisions, and on the transmission of goods, from one state to another: from the sums paid by the keepers of spirit-shops for their license to sell *chicha* and *agua-diente*, varying according to the consumption of the house, from ten to one hundred dollars monthly: and from the produce of stamps. The receipts of the state of Guatemala from these sources averages about \$6000 monthly, and the united duties of the other states will probably amount to an equal sum—making the monthly revenue of the five states about twelve thousand dollars.

But to return to political affairs. The calm which succeeded after the accession of the aristocracy to power, was not of long continuance. Old jealousies were revived between the capital and San Salvador, and a dissatisfied feeling began to manifest itself through all the republic. The supplies for the support of the federation were either irregularly sent or omitted altogether: and Guatemala, finding herself burdened

with the expenses of two governments, began to desire the formation of a central one, upon the ground that the republic did not possess sufficient elements for federalism, it being impracticable to find men for the requisite offices, or money for the necessary expenditure. Under the pretext that the old congress could not reunite, an extraordinary one was convened by the president on the tenth of October, 1826. This illegal act, joined to the supposed intention of changing the form of government, was the signal for revolt. Insurrections broke out in Honduras, Nicaragua, and San Salvador. The former was soon suppressed, and the forces of Nicaragua were rendered harmless by internal commotions, but San Salvador assumed an attitude at once threatening and dangerous to the capital. It denounced Guatemala as inimical to the constitution, and immediately marched a considerable army to the walls of the city. Nothing could exceed the terror of the inhabitants of Guatemala, when on the evening of the sixteenth of March, 1827, this army, threatening destruction, appeared within the outer gates. Every means that fear or superstition could suggest was resorted to in order to excite the feelings of the populace. All the inhabitants were ordered to take arms, and the friars, bringing out the images of the saints, headed troops of women, who with drawn knives, vowed

destruction on all, who should attempt to overthrow their religion. • The excitation of the moment proved sufficient, the San Salvadorians were defeated, and retired in confusion.

From that period to the end of the year, the war continued with various success,—many battles were fought: but with so little spirit and under such wretched direction, that no important results followed. A military spirit could not be infused into the people, and the troops composed of recruits forced into the service, deserted their colours the first favourable opportunity. Battles were pompously announced in the gazettes, in which two were killed, and three horses wounded: and a long bulletin of the taking of St. Ana, (which had previously been evacuated by the enemy,) announced the capture of three horses, and one sabre!

Under such circumstances the contest assumed rather the appearance of a childish quarrel, than the struggle of opposing states. But although the war thus languished, its effects were perhaps more disastrous than would have followed a more profuse effusion of human blood. Commerce was altogether suspended, and agriculture neglected: while contribution after contribution drained the city, and ruined the inhabitants. The state of the public finances was at this time as wretched as can be imagined. After the different



imposts had been exhausted, and the maintenance of the army still became necessary, forced loans were resorted to, and merchants in the space of twelve months, were in this way taxed to the amount of 5 and 6000 dollars each. Nor was the money thus collected wisely expended. Commissions in the army speedily became a traffic in families connected with the government, and troops thus officered, presented an appearance not unlike Hogarth's celebrated picture of the march to Finchley.

Some few European officers mingled in these disputes, and took arms on either side, but disasters seemed always to attend their proceedings. Joseph Pierson a creole of the West Indies, first engaged with the federal government as colonel of Infantry, but having expressed disgust at their proceedings he excited suspicion, upon which he deserted to the opposing party of the state. While commanding these troops he was defeated, and fled to Mexico. A decree of outlawry was issued against him, and when a few months after he passed the frontiers in order to join the Salvadorians, he was taken prisoner and brought to Guatemala, where he was instantly shot by order of the chief of the State. He walked to the place of execution with the greatest firmness, and giving the word of command to fire, died

like a soldier. His talents and character rendered him worthy of a better fate.

A similar lot awaited a Colonel Gordon, (said to be a natural son of the notorious Lord George Gordon,) who also was taken prisoner, under circumstances somewhat the same. The exertions of the British Consul, with much difficulty however, obtained for him liberty to quit the country.

A Colonel Raoul who had served under Napoleon, was about the same time admitted as a colonel of artillery in the service of the federation, but owing to a personal pique with the President, was soon after arrested on charge of disobedience to orders, and sent to the pestiferous castle of Omoa, from whence he was afterwards transported to Salvador. He happened to arrive at the moment when Salvador had declared open war against Guatemala, and was immediately invested with command. Being however soon disgusted with the service, he left the army, threw himself on the mercy of the federal government, and was permitted to retire to a cochineal plantation he possessed in the neighbourhood of Guatemala.

About the latter end of the year 1827, Colonel Perks, who had served many years under Napoleon, arrived in Guatemala, and soon after was appointed commander of the federal forces, while

the direction of the troops of San Salvador, was about the same time confided to a Colonel Merino, who had been actively engaged in the wars of Colombia, and who, with some other officers had recently arrived from the republic of Chili. Under their superintendence the contest was renewed with fresh vigour, and after a desperate attack, the town of St. Ana was retaken by the Salvadorian army, with the loss of from 2 to 300 killed on each side. The town was partially sacked, and many atrocities as might be expected were committed, by troops under so little subordination.

Such has been, and such continues to be the fate of the United Provinces. Every day the animosity of the contending parties increases, and the prospect becomes more and more gloomy for every true patriot.

Nor are foreigners exempt from molestation. The resident English merchants have been taxed to a most enormous extent, in order to meet the expenses; and in some instances, contributions equal in amount to £600 sterling have been extorted in a few months. Equally regardless of personal rights the government has issued a decree commanding every stranger to take arms, under penalty of death.

To add to this desperate state of affairs, discord reigns within the city. The President and the

Chief of the State, mutually jealous of authority, thwart each other's plans, and privately undermine each other's reputation. Arcé is a man whose conduct it is difficult to understand. He early distinguished himself by a revolutionary spirit, and many years before the independence took place, was engaged in secret societies for effecting that object. Probably he owes his elevation more to his being so well known as an enemy of Spain than to any other circumstance. His talents are by no means brilliant, and he is very deficient in habits of business. In several instances, he has displayed considerable personal courage: but has no knowledge whatever of military affairs. By his enemies, he is considered weak and unstable, and his conduct in several instances gives a colouring to the supposition. His arrest of Barrundia exhibited him in the character of a tyrant, while it proved that at that period at least he was led by the church and aristocratical party. Subsequent events have ranked him on the more liberal side, although in public both parties still profess to act together with cordiality against San Salvador, the common enemy.

The chief of the state, Mariano Aycinena, is the mere tool of the church, his talents are far below mediocrity, and his public conduct has only proved his incapacity for office.

In addition to the causes which have been already enumerated, the misfortunes of Guatemala may be attributed to the wretched materials which the country furnishes for a republican form of government, to the consequent absence of a good system of finance and prompt administration of justice, and especially to the want of one master-mind, able to control by its own superiority the narrow souls by which it would be surrounded. Talent and intellect in Guatemala never seem to rise above a certain level. Dull mediocrity reigns undisturbed, and executes all its decrees in fear and uncertainty.

With such a combination of evils it is difficult to foresee what may be the result. Viewed only in its prominent features, it strikingly exhibits the unyielding perseverance with which old principles are upheld, and the determined opposition which the spirit of the age exercises against the antiquated spirit of darkness, and so far it will probably end well for the interests of the human race. But if a more minute examination be made into the private motives and interests which are secretly forwarding, under the name of liberty and liberal principles, the prophetic eye sees but too clearly the tremendous ordeal through which this unhappy country seems destined yet to pass ; views in temporary quiet, only the seeds of new revolutions, and anticipates scenes of

horror and of bloodshed at which humanity turns pale. Bright and fair was the rising of the sun of liberty when he dawned for the first time over the shores of this part of the new world. But the sky has become cloudy and disturbed, while it is yet early in the day; a presage it is to be feared, of that night of darkness and of tempest which now rapidly approaches.

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By letters received from Guatemala bearing date April 1828, we learn that Colonel Perks has been compelled to give up the command of the army in consequence of the refusal of his inferior officers to obey orders;—that the president justly incensed at this act of flagrant contempt for authority, has resigned his office;—that the aristocratical party virtually holding both the president and Colonel Perks as prisoners, have declared their determination to fight no more for the federation, but for the interests of the state of Guatemala,—and that the war still continues with no immediate prospect of termination.

To speculate on future changes would be idle. What star is destined to arise above the dark horizon none can tell. Should the Salvadorians prevail, an ultra liberal government will be established, and the old Spaniards, and the leading aristocratical families, with a great portion of the clergy

both regular and secular will be expatriated. Should the Guatimalian party, on the other hand succeed, they will probably establish a central republic, of which Mariano Aycinena will be president, and the pope prime patron. Both of these designs may however be frustrated by the interference of Mexico or Colombia, in which case Guatemala and Honduras will probably adhere to the former, and Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa-rica fall into the hands of the latter.

## CHAPTER II.

*Early Commerce.—Manufactures.—Harvest of Indigo.—Cochineal.—Tobacco.—Sugar.—Balsams.—Cotton.—Coffee.—Hides.—Productions of the different states.—Mines.—Corpus.—Tabanco.—Imports and Exports,—Ports of the north.—Roads.—River Polichie.—Ports of the South Sea.—Independencia.—Impediments to commercial prosperity.*

THE total absence of all tables connected with commercial statistics, renders it exceedingly difficult to furnish any regular history of the trade and commerce of Guatemala. From a memorial presented in July 1823, to the consulado by their secretary, we learn that the principal source of its early prosperity was the cultivation of cocoa, which was produced in considerable quantities, and of the very first quality. The province of Nicaragua is said to have supplied exclusively San Salvador and Comayagua, while the more easterly parts of the southern coast, covered with plantations over 180 leagues of territory, after supplying the neighbouring provinces, and the



kingdoms of Peru and Mexico, furnished considerable exportations to Europe by way of Vera Cruz.

In the course of years however, partly owing to the difficulties and expense of land carriage, and partly to the excessive duties imposed by the Spanish government, the cultivation of cocoa was encouraged in Tabasco, Caracas and Guayaquil, places far more convenient for exportation. In addition to this, the repeated incursions of the buccaneers who about the beginning of the seventeenth century devastated the shores of America, not unfrequently destroying the plantations, and massacring the inhabitants, obliged the proprietors, unprovided with any means of defence, to abandon their possessions, and fly from the coast. These circumstances operated so powerfully, that by the end of the last century, the cultivation of cocoa had been neglected to such a degree, that these provinces did not produce a sufficient quantity for home consumption, but were forced to buy of their rivals.

A somewhat similar fate has befallen the plantations in which sugar was formerly cultivated, to a very considerable extent. The mills in which it was prepared now in a great measure exist no longer; and New Spain and Peru, where it was chiefly consumed, gold and silver being imported in exchange, have found other markets.

As these two branches of commerce decayed, the attention of the government was turned to the cultivation of indigo, which continues at the present day to be the chief article of exportation.

From the time of the conquest, the Indians were more or less employed in manufactures, and as the kingdom soon found itself very irregularly supplied by Spain, and at the same time shut out from communication with the other nations of Europe, every encouragement was of course given to this branch of native industry.

The articles thus manufactured were strong and by no means despicable, but could only be procured at prices enormously high, while so great at times was the scarcity, that when a quantity of goods arrived from the peninsula, the stores and shops were literally besieged with purchasers, and the government in some instances were obliged to use precautions to avoid tumult.

Such a state of things naturally invited a contraband trade, and the proximity of the English settlers in Belize, afforded a convenient opportunity for obtaining goods at reasonable rates. Once commenced, all the efforts of government were unable to repress its progress: it rapidly assumed the shape of a regular trade, and was carried on systematically, chiefly by the way of the river Leanes. Still the manufactures of the country found a market, and so late as the year

1790, the productions in cotton and wool of the capital, Antigua, and Quezaltenango amounted to a million of dollars annually. As the contraband trade however increased, these gradually declined, and since the trade with Belize has been thrown open, they may fairly be considered as annihilated.

To the encouragement and progress of home manufactures, the memorial above alluded to, appears to attach an undue importance: it says, "Every country has some one principal branch of industry, on which the greater part of the rest are dependent. Among us it is very visible, that the link of our prosperity has been in former ages, our manufactures of cotton, which occupy a prominent place in our internal riches, because the material is the product of our own land, and capable of considerable augmentation,—because it occupied so many hands in preparing the thread and picking the cotton, and because it was capable of extension all over the kingdom. The great mass of the people were clothed in our own cotton cloths, and the produce of the labour was scattered among all classes of the state, thus assisting in the maintenance of the other parts of the community, and giving vigour to the whole. The branch of preparing the thread alone, employed almost all our Indian women and children, the use of the wheel being

altogether unknown; these now live in idleness, and owing to their indolence, misery, and want of education, know no other employment, nor can find any other mode of acquiring money."

It would be easy to prove the fallacy of such arguments as these, were this the place to discuss the great question of free trade, but it is not necessary: the memorial itself proves that there are plenty of other branches in which they might be more advantageously occupied. After recapitulating a great number of valuable gums, resins, and medicinal herbs, it tells us, all these live and die upon the soil that produces them, because there is no one willing to employ himself in collecting them and conveying them to the neighbouring towns, where their value is known, and where a good price would be given for them. With the exception of a few towns in which commerce maintains and encourages population, the sun shines only on extensive shores, arid plains, delicious valleys, and mountains, always green and verdant, which in succession produce freely an almost infinite number of nature's treasures.

With these facts constantly before their eyes, the merchants of Guatemala persist in their opinion, that foreign commerce has ruined Central America. The memorial breathing these sentiments, was read and approved by the chamber of

commerce, and the doctrines it contains may be said to be held universally, without distinction of party. But however firmly they may cling to these opinions, the declaration of them is now useless. The country is deluged with British manufactures, other nations are joining in the traffic, and whatever may be the will or wishes of prejudiced men, no power on earth can now prevent their entrance, or revert back to the wretched policy of former years. The question now should rather be, how agriculture can be best promoted, and the cheap conveyance of produce to the coast be most readily facilitated.

The most important production of the republic in the present day is *indigo*. Its superior quality is acknowledged in Europe, and indeed by its means alone, is the very existence of Guatemala generally known. From official papers of the government it appears, that the average quantity produced, from the years 1791 to 1800, was 875,256 pounds, each year, and from 1809 to 1818, only 459,407 pounds annually—a lamentable decrease in an article so highly valued, and of such material importance to the country. The precise cause of this rapid decrease it is not easy to state, but probably it may be in part attributed to the commencement of a revolutionary spirit.

The following table shows the annual produce for 20 years.

Years.	Pounds.	Years.	Pounds.
1791	1,015,200	1809	732,570
1792	1,139,250	1810	740,820
1793	1,149,800	1811	536,475
1794	789,950	1812	450,425
1795	852,100	1813	257,300
1796	865,100	1814	422,507
1797	763,425	1815	412,781
1798	749,775	1816	376,800
1799	625,612	1817	332,200
1800	802,350	1818	332,200
<i>Pounds,</i>	8,752,562	<i>Pounds,</i>	4,594,078

This statement was officially furnished by the members of the present administration, and by them its correctness is vouched. Later averages were asked, in order to judge whether the revolution had in any way affected the harvests, the answer received was "In the present day there are not data, to enable us to state the exact number of pounds of indigo, which may have been annually collected from the year 1818 to the present time, —since the disorganization of the states, and the great facility afforded for sending it out of the country by ports, where there are not custom houses absolutely impede it; but it may be considered as certain, that the two last years have produced as much or more, than the highest average quantity; although none has been obtained from the state of Leon.

Of the other productions of the country no better accounts can be had. The cultivation of *Cochineal*, which was unknown till the year 1821, has been progressively on the increase. The official papers of government, calculate the annual harvest at from 90 to 105 thousand pounds weight, but this undoubtedly is somewhat overrated; the harvest of 1824 is estimated by well informed individuals, at 70,000 pounds, that of 1825, at 65,000 pounds, and that of 1826, at near 90,000 pounds.

*Tobacco* is a government monopoly, and consequently the weight produced must be known with tolerable correctness; leaving out of the calculation the immense quantities which are sown clandestinely. To such an extent is this carried on, that not one half of the consumers buy of the government, contraband being always to be met with, without the least difficulty. Official papers merely inform us, that from the province of San Salvador, there have been years when only 3000 bales, or 30,000 pounds have been received, while in other years 6 and 7000 bales, or 70,000 pounds have been collected; that Honduras produces from 8 to 10,000 bales, or 80 to 100,000 pounds, and that a new factory has just been planted in Gualan, which it is hoped will prove very advantageous on account of the facility for exportation.

*Tobacco* is bought from the grower by the nation, at one real per pound, and on its account is re-sold for interior consumption, at six reals, and for exportation at two reals, delivered at the ports.

The following table shows the produce of sales, the expenses incurred, and the clear profit to the nation for five years.

Years.	Produce of Sales.	Expenses.	Clear Profit.
1815	541,742 $0\frac{3}{4}$	163,012 3	378,729 $5\frac{1}{2}$
1816	570,776 $2\frac{1}{2}$	256,743 $4\frac{1}{4}$	314,032 6
1817	510,079 $2\frac{1}{4}$	289,891 $1\frac{1}{4}$	220,188 1
1818	503,677 $3\frac{1}{4}$	309,586 $0\frac{1}{4}$	194,091 3
1819	794,041 $2\frac{1}{2}$	306,635 $4\frac{1}{4}$	487,405 $6\frac{1}{4}$
Amount.	2,920,316 $3\frac{1}{4}$	1,325,868 5	1,594,447 $5\frac{3}{4}$
Average Amount.	584,063	265,173	318,889 $4\frac{1}{4}$

*Sugar* is produced chiefly about Sonzonate and St. Ana. The same papers tell us, "that there have been years when more than three or four thousand quintals, or three or four hundred thousand pounds, have been exported by the port of the South Sea; but in others, nothing."

All along the western coast, from the bay of Jiquilisco to the port of Acajutla, are to be found almost every species of the *Balsam Tree*, so that the coast takes its name from the quantities which grow on its borders. As much can be collected as is wished, but this branch of trade is now greatly neglected.



In the papers before referred to, the article of *cotton* is thus noticed: "The *cotton* of Usulután, and the rest of the provinces of San Salvador, is superior in quality, and was formerly collected in considerable quantities, supplying sufficient for at least half the consumption of all the old manufactories of the kingdom, beside exporting some to the provinces of Mexico; but in the present day, scarcely any is produced, owing to the quantities of manufactured cottons which have been introduced from foreign countries. It might have been shipped in considerable quantities by the Pacific; but unfortunately these ports have been ruined, by the introduction of goods by the north."

Here again the same ignorance displays itself, in official statements. If it be true that the cotton is of so superior a quality why is it not still cultivated and exported, since at least three times the number of vessels requisite for its conveyance still come to the ports of the Pacific, notwithstanding their supposed ruin, owing to the introduction of goods by the north. The memorial before quoted, which it should be borne in mind was sanctioned and approved by the Chamber of Commerce, speaking of the ports of the north, says: "In the present day, with the exception of Omoa, these ports may be said to be abandoned." The fact is, that the cotton of Usulután, although of good quality, has some peculiarity about the

seeds, which makes it impossible to extract the fibre by the usual machinery ; but if this difficulty cannot be obviated, a better species might be sown.

*Coffee* is very little cultivated. What is now collected, is chiefly for the consumption of the few strangers who reside in Guatemala, as the natives of the country scarcely ever use it. Some few *hides* are exported by the north ; but the chief population is so distant from the ports as to render any considerable trade in them impossible.

In the year 1825 a commission was appointed to inquire into the state of commerce five years previous, and five years subsequent to the revolution. The commissioners' report is in these terms : " We have no positive data upon which we can state exactly the condition of our commerce during either of these periods, owing to the confused state of every branch of the administration ; but from observation, and the opinions of intelligent men, we have the honour to report, that the five years previous to the revolution were the most miserable we have known, and that from the independence to the present period, our commerce may be considered to have doubled. It is well known, that previous to the revolution, our mercantile transactions were confined to the peninsula, or we ought rather to say, to Cadiz. It is equally well known, that in ex-

change for goods received from thence, they would only take our indigo in return, this production being equivalent to all the goods we received. The harvest sometimes reached 1,200,000 pounds, but during the five years previous to the revolution it did not exceed 600,000 pounds, which at the low price of eight rials per pound, only amounted to 600,000 dollars, so that a million of dollars was the greatest sum our indigo ever produced in Cadiz. For this we received in return, goods to the same value, which was the utmost amount of business transacted in the kingdom of Guatemala; for although it be true, that we carried on some trade in the markets of Havanna and of Peru, yet these were in articles that cost little, and do not materially vary the general statement.

From the time that we pronounced ourselves independent, and the light of liberty shone upon our nation, as our ports were opened to all the world, our resources began to unfold themselves; agriculture received a new impulse, and commerce was greatly advanced. Since then the harvest of indigo, according to the calculation of intelligent merchants, has doubled, that of cochineal has improved in an equal degree, and the prices of each have risen in nearly the same proportion. An equal increase has taken place in the amount of goods introduced for internal consumption, so

that, if before the revolution our imports and exports united, did not exceed two millions of dollars, they may now be fairly considered to have advanced to four millions." After recapitulating the other productions of the country, the commissioners express their conviction, that the commerce of the country will go forward, increasing in the same ratio, and urge the immediate cultivation of the various fruits with which the country abounds. The internal commerce they calculate at about a million of dollars.

This report must however be considered as far too flattering. That for some years previous to the revolution the commerce of the country was retrograding, is evident from the fact, that on the 24th of April, 1819, a decree was published in the Havanna, which after stating the falling condition of the kingdom of Guatemala, and the importance of supporting that valuable possession, and fomenting its agriculture, ordains, that the indigo and other fruits and productions of these provinces, shall enter the ports of the Havanna free of all duties, and in their re-exportation enjoy the same privilege. That the cultivation of indigo received a considerable impulse from the causes stated, is equally true,—but owing to the disturbed state of the country, the harvests have not exceeded hitherto in any considerable degree, those of former years. That

the quantity of goods imported has considerably increased is certain, but the overplus has been paid in coin; besides which, the markets are at the present day loaded with British manufactures. So long as civil war rages in those parts of the country where indigo is almost universally cultivated, the produce must be rather on the decrease than otherwise.

A sketch of the principal employment of the inhabitants of each state will show the slight degree of encouragement given to agriculture in the different provinces.

The inhabitants of the state of Guatemala, are employed—1st. As carriers, for which they serve all the other states, in their importations and exportations. 2d. In the production of cochineal, a little indigo, about 500 cargoes of cocoa, and some flour. 3d. In the manufacture of some coarse woollens, of which it is calculated a quantity equal in value to 200,000 dollars is furnished to the other states. Those of San Salvador are almost entirely employed in the cultivation of indigo, cotton, and sugar. Those of Honduras, in the rearing of about 40,000 head of cattle introduced annually into San Salvador and Guatemala, and in the cultivation of tobacco. Those of Nicaragua, in the growth of cocoa, and the breeding of cattle. While those of Costa Rica, scarcely raise more of any article than is requisite for

the internal consumption of the province, with the exception of some mahogany and cedar, which is shipped for Peru. The manufactures of panelas, and the growth of maize, as common to all the states, need not be noticed.

A very useful table, formed in 1818, on the cultivation of cocoa in the province of Suchitepequez, exhibits clearly the proportion the Indians employed in agriculture, bear to the white and coloured population, and the way in which the lands are divided. From it an idea may be formed of the other districts. The province of Suchitepequez consists of sixteen villages, containing 503 Indian cultivators of cocoa, and 115 white and coloured, employed in the same manner; the former possess 9408 *cuerdas* of land, the latter 26,769; the Indians own 241,613 old trees, and 3,875 new ones; the whites and ladinos 540,808 old trees, and 322,512 new ones; the latter having besides 142,940 plants in seed. The trees of the Indians amount to 245,488, and those of the whites and ladinos to 863,320. The total number of trees in the province being 1,108,808. In the whole of the province, the Indians are, 12,190, and the Spaniards and ladinos, 3,374.

From hence we learn that the Indian population in proportion to the white and coloured, is

as four to one, and the Indian cultivators of cocoa to the latter similarly employed is as five to one. While the proportion of land possessed by the whites and ladinos, is three times as great as that in the possession of Indians, and the number of trees owned by the former, is four times as great as those possessed by the latter. The civilization of the Indians, the division of the land into small lots, and their participation in equal rights and privileges, is evidently one of the steps most required for the prosperity of the country.

Up to the year 1800, Quezaltenango in the state of Guatemala, had thirty small manufactures of linen, cotton, serges and coarse cloths, which unitedly employed about 200 hands, but these have rapidly disappeared, and very few now remain. The annual fair held at this place, was till within the last few years considerable. The average sales were estimated at about 18,000 bushels of wheat,—14,000 dollars worth of cocoa,—50,000 dollars worth of panelas,—12,000 of sugar,—30,000 of woollen cloths and 5000 of cottons. This fair is now very inconsiderable.

In the environs of St. Ana, are some iron foundries, which up to the year 1800 produced annually 1500 quintals, or 150,000 pounds; at the present day they do not furnish more than a third of that weight.

The manufacture of gunpowder, saltpetre and playing cards, are government monopolies, the quantity does not exceed what is required for internal consumption. Coarse hats, shoes and saddlery, are manufactured in considerable quantities. Fancy articles are finished very neatly, and mats, baskets and other curiosities are cleverly executed by the Indians.

Almost every kind of artificer may probably be met with, but they are generally very idle and more than ordinarily troublesome, in the execution of what they undertake. Juarros tells us that the manufacturers of fine earthenware, can compete in their productions with the porcelain of Germany; nothing however has yet been produced in Guatemala better than a very coarse tea cup, and earthenware and porcelain of every kind is still imported from Europe.

The only remaining source of national wealth to be noticed is the mines. Humboldt in his table of the respective produce of the mines of America, has written against those of Guatemala, "nothing," as Spain never derived from them any benefit. Since the revolution the most exaggerated statements have been sent forth respecting the mineral wealth of Guatemala, and several of the mines are now in the hands of companies who are attempting to work them.



In the district of Tegucigalpa in the state of Honduras, are to be found thirteen mines, among which that of Corpus has hitherto been the most celebrated; it is said to have produced at one time gold in such abundance, as to excite suspicions of the reality of the metal, and a treasury was appointed upon the spot to receive the king's fifths, but after this appointment the golden dream vanished, and no more was heard of this immense source of wealth. The appointment is merely said to have proved unsuccessful. The neighbourhood of *Olancho* is also famous for the quantity of fine gold, which is said to have been collected in the sands of the river Guyape in its course through this valley. In Costa Rica mines are to be met with in abundance, but of what quality they may be, it is impossible to say. No kind of record seems to have been kept of their true state, or of what they have at any time produced.

In order to form some conception on the subject, a statement was asked from the master of the mint, showing the number of marks of gold and silver coined for fifteen years previous, and fifteen years subsequent to 1810, with any information he was able to afford, on the productions of the mines. The following is an exact copy of the document. "Statement manifesting the number of marks of Gold and Silver, coined in thirty

years—the fifteen first anterior to the year 1810, and the other fifteen posterior, showing the comparative increase, during the latter epoch.

### FIRST FIFTEEN YEARS.

Years.	Marks of Gold.	Marks of Silver.	Value.
1796-7		45,775 2 1	389,089 6
98-9	134 2 4 0	35,037 3 6	316,084 4
1800-1	149 2 3 3	39,879 7 2	359,284 5
2-3	- - -	15,318 4 7	130,208 1 $\frac{1}{4}$
4-5	- - -	36,218 6 3	307,859 6
6-7	- - -	29,888 0 2	254,048 1 $\frac{3}{4}$
8-9	- - -	32,727 6 7	278,186 6 $\frac{1}{4}$
10	- - -	18,714 1 6	159,070 6 $\frac{3}{4}$
<i>Total,</i>	283 4 7 3	253,560 1 2	2,193,832 5

### LAST FIFTEEN YEARS.

Years.	Marks of Gold.	Marks of Silver.	Value.
1811-12		30,050 3 1	255,427 2
13-14	118 2 0 0	50,672 3 5	446,797 6 $\frac{1}{2}$
15-16		76,488 2 4	650,153 5
17-18	261 3 4 0	77,979 5 7	698,382 5 $\frac{3}{4}$
19-20		67,408 1 6	572,969 7
21-22		62,323 2 2	529,747 7
23-24	672 0 5 0	41,103 3 0	440,781 2 $\frac{1}{2}$
25	473 1 3 0	17,855 3 1	216,122 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
<i>Total,</i>	1524 7 4 0	423,881 0 2	38,10,382 5 $\frac{1}{4}$

*Increase during the last fifteen years.*

Marks,	oz.	ochavos.	tomines.	Marks,	oz.	
1241	2	4	5	170,320	70	\$1,616,550 $\frac{1}{4}$

Average annual increase: \$107,770

This statement solely refers, to the quantity of gold and silver, coined in this house during the thirty years named, and it must not be deduced

from hence that this is all our mines have produced since a great quantity of these metals have been employed in works of ornament, and a still greater quantity exported, particularly since the year 1821. It is positively known, that the greater part of the merchants of the state of Honduras, and of other parts, have exported to foreign countries great quantities of gold and silver bullion, so that according to the calculation of intelligent persons, scarcely a tenth part of the metals obtained within the last six years, will have passed through the mint. On this account it is impossible to state exactly the effective produce of each year, and much less the amount exported to Europe, because the greater part has been effected clandestinely. In all the territory of this republic there are mines in abundance, but particularly in the state of Honduras, where the greater number are to be found, and where nature presents the greatest mineral wealth. In numbers 111, and 112, of the periodical called the *Indicador*, there is the following communication.

“The mine called Tabanco in the state of Salvador, had been abandoned by its owners, who despaired of making it profitable on account of the great difficulty they found in removing the water, in spite of the activity with which

they laboured to accomplish it. We are now assured that it has begun to yield, the water having been removed by a steam-engine; so that now not only will they gain from the mine all the advantages it may offer, but others will reap advantage from the experiment, and this branch of riches will again be opened for our country. —Without enumerating more than the above mines and those of Guayarillas, Tuzcaran, Macuelizo, La Baca, El Cuyal, and Merendon, there will be found sufficient to fill the country with treasures, if they are worked with care by a sufficient number of labourers, directed by scientific persons; and so great is the quantity of gold and silver they contain, that they may be said to be inexhaustible.

“These observations far from being exaggerated, rather appear to me below the truth, since they do not speak of many other mines, celebrated for their richness, such as that of Corpus, which is at this time clearing of water by a steam-engine, under the direction of Mr. Moyle; that of Cedros, St<sup>a</sup>. Lucia, St<sup>a</sup>. Barbara, San Antonio, Las Animas, the Malacate, and the Encuentros: neither does it mention near 2000 metallic veins, of which the government of the state of Honduras was informed in the years 1825 and 1826; nor does it say any thing of the great riches of the hills of Aguacate, near Car-

tago, from whence since the year 1822, when it was discovered, have been received 1200 marks of gold ; estimating that twice as much more has been exported to foreign countries. Mr. Gourmez a mining engineer, who has visited most of the mines of Honduras, assures me, that it is easier to find mines than men to work them, so that facilitating the means of clearing them, and finding labourers, there is reason to believe, that within a short time, our mineral productions may rival those of the republics of Mexico and Peru."

*This document is signed by the Master of the Mint.*

A more useless or deceptive appendix it was scarcely possible to have added ; for although it be true, that a considerable portion of metal has been employed in works of ornament, and a still greater quantity clandestinely exported, it should be remembered, that very considerable importations have been made from Mexico, Peru, and Chile, and that a great proportion of the specie which is clandestinely sent out of the country, is not in bars but in current coin.

To quote from an old newspaper an erroneous statement, and to assert that two steam-engines are at work when it is well known that as yet only one of them has been put up, is unworthy of any person officially employed ; while the story of

2000 metallic veins having been discovered in 1825 and 1826, there can be no doubt is grossly exaggerated. Yet there is no better mode of obtaining information, and under present circumstances to expect any thing approaching to satisfactory or correct statements, is quite out of the question.

The mine of Corpus has been for about two years under the direction of an English company, and a considerable number of Cornish miners, under the superintendence of Mr. Moyle, an able mining engineer, have proceeded to it. The disasters and difficulties they have experienced, are of the same character as those suffered by others engaged in similar undertakings. The greater number of the men on their arrival at the coast, fell into habits of drunkenness, and several of them died; while others were obliged to be left sick in the capital. Those who proceeded forward, immediately commenced the clearing out of the water, and the last accounts received were, that the mine appeared very rich, and the prospect flattering, but that hitherto no metal had been extracted. Provisions were very scarce, and of the worst quality, while the surrounding country was in a distracted state, owing to civil tumults.

Results rather more favourable have however, been experienced at the mine of Tabanco, under

the direction of Dr. Rhy, and Mr. Bennett of Belize. A sketch of the mine and surrounding country has appeared in the Honduras Gazette, from which we learn, that the mine is situated in a very romantic part of the province of San Salvador, fourteen leagues from San Miguel, and that it is surrounded by a chain of high hills, over which a good carriage road, eighteen feet wide, has been cut in a zigzag direction, by the proprietors of the mines, for the purpose of conveying the large pieces of a steam-engine, which were too heavy to be conveyed in the usual way on mules, from La Seba (a small port on the Pacific) to the mine. A considerable space is said to be levelled near the mouth, on which is erected an engine-house, blacksmiths' forge, carpenters' shop, and a long range of buildings for the accommodation of the workmen. The engine was at that time at work, and is described as a good one, of six horse power, acting so forcibly, that, although the water in the shaft occupied a space of twelve feet by eight or nine, it cleared at the average of thirteen inches within the hour. The mine is said to have been wrought to a very considerable perpendicular depth, independent of numerous branches, or levels, as they are termed; all of which must be full of water, so that much time must necessarily be occupied before it is completely drained. The country about Tabanco

is described as mountainous, the air pure, and the climate healthy ; the soil is, however, very poor, and unproductive. The principal articles produced, are, sugar-cane, maize, and indigo ; the latter, very inferior, and the two former, though good in their kind, in quantities quite inadequate to the consumption.

A third mine, situated in Costa-Rica, is said, also, to be in the hands of the English, but no particulars respecting the owners, or account of the progress they have made, has yet reached the capital. The expense attendant on the working of mines in Guatemala, must, necessarily be immense, while the profits, at the best, are probably very doubtful. Calculations, much too sanguine, have hitherto been made, on the advantages that would accrue from the introduction of English machinery, since, in forming them, the local situation has been too frequently left out of the question. The fixing of steam engines, in countries where every thing has to be transported many hundreds of miles, on mules, over high and rugged mountains, and in parts where fuel is often scarce, is no easy task, and, even if accomplished, the advantages of it must be very problematical.

In all probability, we shall find, within a very few years, the mines again worked by the natives, although under the direction of foreigners, since the risk and expense attendant on bringing out



Englishmen, is far too great to allow of its continuance. In this case, the old plans must probably be once more resorted to, since the prejudices of the natives will oppose an insuperable obstacle to the introduction of new ones. Yet still the difficulties of the undertaking will be considerable, and if, with the many advantages the Spaniards possessed, as despots of the soil, they could gain but little, our superior energy and skill is not sufficient to produce results so brilliant as have been supposed.

The Europeans of Guatemala, steadily assert that the Indians were not forced to work in the mines contrary to their inclination; but a few lines which we find in Juarros, who is at least an unexceptionable witness on this point, proves the contrary to be the fact. He says in alluding to the *Alcalde-Mayor*, who was appointed for the purpose of superintending the working of the mines, and receiving the king's fifths: "This officer was invested with plenary jurisdiction both in civil and criminal matters, within the boundaries of the mines, and had the power of compelling a fourth part of the Indians, within a circuit of twelve leagues, to work in them."

With privileges such as these, it is truly surprising, that the Spaniards, while extracting wealth from Mexico and Peru, should have failed to enrich themselves from mines so flatteringly descri-

bed. Probably the result of the present English speculations will solve the enigma, and prove, that the present scarcity of population, the wretched state of the roads, and other local disadvantages, increase the expenses too materially to allow of any considerable profit.

That the amount of the precious metals in circulation in the country, is considerably less than it was twenty years ago, there can be no doubt. The scarcity of produce suitable for exportation, and the duties imposed upon indigo, by the government, tend to encourage the exportation of specie, and considerable quantities both of coin and plate, are constantly shipped for Belize and Europe.

The amount of foreign goods annually imported into Guatemala may be calculated at two millions of dollars, while the quantity of produce exported does not amount to two-thirds of that sum; the overplus being probably paid in coin. Humboldt estimates the annual amount of goods introduced into Guatemala, before the revolution, at this sum, (without including the contraband trade, which at that time was considerable,) but this was certainly not the case.

From a table published in 1796, it appears, that from the years 1790, to 1794, inclusive, only nineteen vessels arrived from the peninsula, bringing with them goods of different kinds, to the

amount of about five millions of dollars, and receiving in exchange 4,702,800 lbs. of indigo; 729 arrobas of zarza; 1015 jars of balsam, and 192,059 dollars; the whole being equal in value to 4,942,131 dollars, and averaging only 988,426 dollars annually.

The present importations are made almost entirely by the ports of Omoa and Yzabal. The former about  $15^{\circ} 23'$  N. lat. and  $88^{\circ} 56'$  W. long. 100 leagues from Guatemala, is the principal depot for goods from the Havana and the Peninsula, with which some trade is still carried on; and the latter for British merchandize from Belize. A few French vessels, and three or four from the United States, have recently arrived at Omoa; and, as the Dutch have appointed a Consul in Truxillo, and a Consul-General in Guatemala, it is to be presumed, that they will soon become competitors.

From Omoa, goods are forwarded by the river Motagua to Gualan, and, from thence, to the capital, by mules, while all the goods arriving at Yzabal, are transported across the mountain of Mico to Gualan; from whence they proceed by the same route. In each case, from six to nine months is consumed, before any quantity of packages can arrive. To the scarcity of mules, and want of energy on the part of the muleteers, the delay must be attributed, as, with immediate forwarding,

they might reach the capital in a month or six weeks. The indigo for exportation is principally conveyed on mules from the province of San Salvador to the capital, and from thence to the northern coast by the same means, and equal, if not greater risks and delays are incurred. The ports of the South Sea, now receive only a few vessels from the neighbouring republics, and little traffic of importance is carried on in them.

Such is the deplorable state of the agriculture and commerce of Guatemala. It remains to be considered, what means are most likely to promote the one, and improve the other. The scarcity of population, the habits of the people, and the facilities that exist for gaining a subsistence without labour, are obstacles which time only can remove. Considerable emigrations from Europe, seem indispensable to the prosperity of the country, but neither the government or the people are yet liberal enough to offer any temptation to strangers, to settle upon their soil. Other and perhaps more permanent impediments will be found in the inland situation of the capital, in the expense and difficulty attendant on land carriage, and in the deserted state of all the ports.

The memorial of the Consulado, thus laments facts which can no longer be concealed; it says, "the commerce of the ports of Realejo, and Acapulco is now reduced to two or three small ships

each year from Peru and New Spain. The port of Omoa is alone sufficient for the trade with the Peninsula, reduced to very few vessels; indeed all these ports with the exception of Omoa, may be said to be abandoned. Between them and the capital lie immense tracts of country, without regular roads, and totally unprotected, and the risk of forwarding produce to them for exportation is considerable. Nor is it lessened when they arrive. Without suitable stores, or warehouses, goods must remain four or perhaps six months, waiting some vessel to transport them; while the villages on the coast unhealthy and pestiferous, owing to the quantity of trees, which have been permitted for years to multiply unmolested around them, are inhabited only by the lowest order of mariners, and totally undefended. In these situations the country round does not furnish even the common necessities of life."

"Were the rich and fruitful lands, which lie from Comayagua to Truxillo, from the Llanos. Gualan, and Coban, to Omoa and the Golfo Dulce, and those which stretch along the extensive coast of the South Sea, filled with an industrious population, willing to cultivate the various fruits which are the natural productions of this favoured spot, blessed as it is with every variety of climate and of soil, there is not perhaps a country in the world, which would be more prosperous.

or which contains within itself in a greater degree, the elements of wealth.

“ Whether the transportation of the Caribs, now useless in Truxillo, to the shores of the Dulce, and the banks of the Motagua, or whether the division of the land near the coast into small lots, and ceded to Indians on condition of cultivating a certain portion with the fruit of the country, be desirable, is for others to determine. That the establishment of small settlements on the northern coast, as well as on the southern, and the cultivation of cocoa, which from its superior quality might again be transported both to Mexico and Peru, as well as to Europe, would be beneficial, is however certain.”

Such are the published opinions of the Consulado as a body, upon the deplorable catalogue of evils which afflict their country. That the extension of agriculture in Guatemala, is identified with the habilitation of the ports, and the population of its coasts, no reasonable doubt can be entertained: since from its present locality, the expenses of transportation, alone forbid competition with other countries. This inconvenience might however in some degree be lessened by changing the route which goods now take, in order to leave or arrive at the capital.

Up to the year 1796 the importations from the Peninsula were made by the Gulf, and forward-

ed from Yzabal to Guatemala by mules ; but about this period a company was formed for opening the navigation of the river Motagua, from Gualan to Omoa, and proposals were issued containing tables, which exhibited the difference in freight. The company however from some cause or other, failed in accomplishing its object, and with the exception of a few private individuals, the road by Yzabal was invariably frequented. In September 1815, a royal order was issued for the navigation of this river, which appears to have had the desired effect. A few individuals united together, and aided by a loan of 5000 dollars from the Consulado, provided suitable vessels and established a regular communication. Since then it has been the regular channel for all exports, and for a great portion of the imports, although eight days on an average is consumed in the descent, and from fifteen to twenty-four in the ascent.

To no other cause but an unwillingness to change old roads, can be attributed the neglect of the river Polichic, which seems to offer for the northern coast, a far more convenient and easier passage, than the Motagua and Gualan.\* By

\* Omoa to Gualan by the Motagua, 15 to 20 days.

	Leagues.		Leagues.
Gualan to San Pablo	6	Guastatoya to Omoyta,	9
San Pablo to Zacapa,	4	Omoyta to San José,	7
Zacapa to Chimalapa,	10	San José to Guatemala,	7
Chimalapa to Guastatoya,	9		—
			52

a royal order of the 30th of March 1795, the Consulado was directed to encourage the navigation of this river, but for some unknown reason no steps were taken for that purpose. The total absence of an enterprising spirit, has prevented private individuals from following at their own risk this route with goods, so that with a few solitary exceptions, it remains unfrequented.

This river rises in the mountain of Xucanab, and in its way to the Amatique Gulf is joined by the Cahabon, from whence it becomes navigable for launches, or as they are called by the natives pit-pans; and flat canoes can ascend much higher than this junction. Juarros says that in former times, the merchandise imported from Spain to Guatemala, and the returning exports were conveyed by this river; and even so lately as 1793 the organ sent from Europe, for the church of San Domingo was transported by this route to the capital. From Guatemala to Panchisquí the place of embarkation, is a journey of about six days, consisting of 50 leagues; the road is more level than the one to Gualan, cooler during the hot months, and if it were frequented, would soon be more convenient, both with regard to provisions and lodgings. From Panchisquí to the mouth of the river, which is close to the Port of Yzabal, is a navigation of not more than twenty-four hours in the descent, or four days in the



ascent. From this point to Omoa, it is easy to arrive in two or three days if the weather be favorable,—but during three or four months in the year, a more considerable delay must be calculated upon.\* At all events a saving of four or five days would be insured,—but this is not sufficient to tempt private individuals to leave the accustomed route, unless they could be certain that launches and mules would be ready on their arrival. Were active steps taken to prepare these requisites, there can be little doubt but that it would again be frequented, and a considerable advantage accrue to the capital.

On the Pacific the only ports frequented, are Conchagua situated a few leagues from San Salvador, which possesses one of the finest harbours in the world; and Acajutla an open bay without shelter, five leagues from Sonzonate; which is used as the port of Guatemala, from which it is fifty-five leagues distant over rough and mountainous country. There is however, another point known under the name of the Bar of Istapa, from which goods might be forwarded

\* Omoa to mouth of River, 3 days.  
Ascent. 3 days.

Leagues.		Leagues.	
Panchisquí to Chimaquin,	9	Santa Rosa to Salama,	4
Chimaquin to Tucuru,	5	Salama to La Vega,	6
Tucuru to Taltic,	7	La Vega to Lodivoy,	5
Taltic to Santa Rosa,	5	Lodivoy to Guatemala,	9

much more rapidly and securely, were proper means used for that purpose.\* Its importance in a commercial point of view, is thus stated by Juarros; he says, "It affords every convenience and advantage for carrying on an extensive traffic in the Pacific. Its contiguity to the city of Guatemala, would enable speculators to obtain all the productions of the country at a moderate rate, which could be conveyed by land carriage to the place of embarkation at a trifling expense, on a road that was opened and levelled in 1539, for the purpose of transporting upon carriages some of Alvarado's small vessels. There is excellent anchorage well sheltered on every point, there are neither reefs nor shallows, and the entrance is perfectly safe and easy. A redoubt with four or six pieces of cannon would afford protection to the shipping; and for the construction of such a defence, there are many eligible points. With respect to ship building, the advantages are of still greater importance.

<i>Route to Acapulco.</i>		<i>Route to Istapa.</i>	
	Leagues.		Leagues.
* Guatemala to Los Arcos,	9	* Guatemala to Amatitan,	6
Cuajamquilapa,	6	San Christoval,	3
Puente de los Esclaves,	1	Escuintla,	6
Oratorio,	3	Mistlan,	3
Galpatagua,	6	Masagua,	1
Rio de Paz,	5	Ipsanguasati,	4
Aguachapa,	6	Naranjo,	2
Apaneca,	5	Overo,	4
Zonzonate,	9	Salinas Santa Rosa,	5
Acapulco,	5	Raudal,	2
	55		36

as wood of the best quality is found in the neighbourhood in quantities inexhaustible. Cordage is still more plentiful, for on every part of this coast, the *pita* grows luxuriantly and profusely, which is much superior for the manufacture of cables and other ropes to the *esparto*, (*genista hispanica*.) Pitch and tar are both good and cheap in the valley of Jumais; and freights of valuable wood or agricultural produce, may be procured here to almost any extent."

The attention of the government has of late been directed to this subject: the point in question, has been named the port of Independencia; and a commission has been appointed to take the necessary steps towards fitting it for the reception of vessels. It is situated according to Mr. Hamilton Moore, in lat.  $14^{\circ}$  N. and long.  $92^{\circ} 35'$  W. Like Acajutla, it is only an open roadstead and unprotected, the statement of Juarros in this respect being erroneous; but the conveniences for landing at Raudal, a fishing station on the coast, close to the bar of the River Michatoyat, are equal if not superior to the former. The advantages to be derived from the undertaking, arise chiefly from its proximity to the capital, and the ease with which goods may be transported. Distant only thirty-six leagues, the road is for the most part perfectly level, and with the exception of a short distance near to Guati-

mala, goods might be transported in carriages with trifling expense, little delay, and less risk of robberies. Even by mules, packages could be forwarded at the utmost in six days, and at an expense of not more than three reales an *arroba* (25 lb.) While by the northern ports, a lapse of six weeks and an expenditure of five times that sum, would at least be requisite. So great a difference would abundantly repay the extra freight round Cape Horn, and should the project be carried into effect, there can be little doubt but that the course of a few years will bring nearly all the foreign commerce of Guatemala, to the ports of the Pacific.

Nor would the advantage of such a change, be confined merely to the trade with the capital. Vessels leaving Europe in the month of June, and arriving at Independencia about the end of November, after leaving part of their cargo at this place for Guatemala, might pass forward to Libertad and Conchagua; where goods might be landed for the states of San Salvador and Leon, and freights of indigo, or of the valuable woods of Nicaragua, all of which are on the spot, might be taken in before the approach of the stormy weather. That by this means, an immense saving both of labour and money, might be effected is certain, and it is not improbable that

the experiment will be tried, before many years have elapsed.

One subject of dispute among the contending states of Guatemala, is the situation of the capital; the people of San Salvador wishing it removed to their city, as better suited for the trade of the republic.

Should this change ever take place, and it is by no means impossible, although perhaps distant, a still greater weight would be given to the motives, for encouraging foreign traffic by the Pacific, and if to this should be added the cultivation of cocoa, and other fruits near the coast, the state of the country would be materially improved. But before commerce can attain a solid basis, other changes equally important are required, among which new regulations for the recovery of debts is not one of the least. At the present day, no fixed or regular period of payment, can be said to exist. Goods are sold it is true according to their invoice, with a defined period of credit, but if at the expiration of that time, the purchaser finds himself unable to fulfil his contract, or if from avaricious or dilatory motives he does not wish to pay, he asks two, three, or more months' additional credit, which is almost invariably granted. Should he after various delays of this kind become involved in debt, and the patience of his creditors be completely worn

out, he is summoned before the Consulado or chamber of commerce, and the court takes possession of his goods. After the usual forms have been passed through, notice is given to his creditors, and some kind of dividend is then made; but as to its amount in almost every case, the creditor finds himself at the mercy of his debtor.

Proceedings so dilatory, preclude that promptness and punctuality which is the very soul of business. Another impediment to commercial prosperity, will be found in that jealousy which still exists against the establishment of foreigners in the republic, a feeling which will only yield to a more correct knowledge of their true interests. To such an extent is this folly carried, that in the month of March 1827, a decree passed the legislative assembly almost unanimously, forbidding strangers to sell by retail in the capital, a law which if carried into force at the present day, would tend to the entire exclusion of every foreigner. Strong representations were made on the part of the consuls resident in the capital, and the decree did not receive the approbation of the senate. It was probably smothered by its friends, from a conviction that to carry it forward, would under existing circumstances be impolitic. The proposal however, and the unanimity with which

it passed the assembly, clearly shows the current feeling upon this subject.

Whether Guatemala will ever attain to any very high pitch of prosperity as a nation, is perhaps doubtful. Its chief advantage consists in the variety of its productions, but on this the prosperity of a country never did or can depend. The lapse of many years, and the emigration from Europe of a more industrious population, would seem to be necessary, before its soil can be duly cultivated, or its agriculture in any considerable degree promoted.

### CHAPTER III.

*Natural History,—Productions,—Physical Geography,—Rivers and Lakes,—Diseases,—Idiotcy.*

EVERY part of the United Provinces invites the attention of the naturalist to a field, in which scarcely any investigations have, as yet, been made. In the zoological department, may be found a species of lion, without mane,—the tiger, or, rather, the jaguar,—the manati, tapir, and wild boar,—the bear, and the wolf,—monkeys of every description, from the most diminutive of all their tribes, to the great baboon, bold and powerful enough to combat man,—stags, squirrels, and all the domestic animals, besides many others, peculiar to the country, and undescribed by naturalists.

Of the ornithology, still less is known; an infinite variety of the feathered tribe, including, it is supposed, near two hundred species, found only in these parts of the New World, and comprising



every order and genera, from the unclean and heavy-winged vulture, to the fairy little humming-bird, delight the eye with their plumage, or enliven the woods with their song. In the warmer provinces, serpents and reptiles infest every bush, and the entomologist, even in his chamber, may revel among specimens of every class and genus.

To attempt any thing like description of such a diversified host, is out of the question. The ferocious animals seldom leave the woods, and lakes, which they inhabit, to visit the dwellings of men. The birds most distinguished for the beauty of their plumage, are met with in the hot and unhealthy districts, and, both serpents and insects, in these situations, increase in size, number, and malignity.

In the cities, the common carrion-vulture may be seen perched upon every house, generally bending over the roof with a sensual and melancholy gaze, in search of some dead animal, upon which it descends with a heavy flapping motion, and immediately picks out the eyes, as the choicest morsel; after which, it and its fellows never leave the body till they have reduced it to the most perfect skeleton. These disgusting birds perform most faithfully the part of scavengers, and, in hot countries, where cleanliness is not regarded, probably contribute considerably toward the health of the inhabitants.

In the evening, a species of bat, termed by Buffon, the vampyre, or flying dog, of New Spain, (because it sucks the blood of men and animals, while they are asleep, without causing sufficient pain to awaken them :) sometimes enters apartments which are contiguous to orange trees.— During my stay in Guatimala, I killed one in my own room, and had the opportunity of examining the mouth of the animal, through a powerful microscope.

Buffon says, “ I have frequently thought it worth while to examine, how it is possible that these animals, should suck the blood of a person asleep, without causing at the same time a pain so sensible as to awake him. Were they to cut the flesh with their teeth, or with their claws, the pain of the bite would effectually rouse any of the human species, however soundly asleep. With their tongue only, is it possible for them to make such minute apertures in the skin, as to imbibe the blood through them, and to open the veins without causing an acute pain. The tongue of the vampyre, I have not had an opportunity to observe : but that of several rousettes (a somewhat different species, found only in Africa, and the southern parts of Asia,) which Mr. Daubenton has attentively examined, seems to indicate the possibility of the fact : it is sharp and full of prickles directed backward, and it appears that

these prickles or points, from their exceeding minuteness may be insinuated into the pores of the skin, may enlarge them, and may penetrate them so deep, as to command a flow of blood by the continued suction of the tongue. But we can only conjecture upon a fact, of which all the circumstances are imperfectly known to us, and of which some are perhaps exaggerated, or erroneously related by the writers who have transmitted them to us." Of the mischievous properties of this ugly and deformed animal, there can however be no doubt. To the testimony of M. de la Condamine, referred to by M. Buffon, may be added that of numerous Americans, who have seen it fixed on the neck of mules, and attacking the nostrils of man. The reasoning of M. Buffon, as to the mode in which it effects its purpose, will not hold with regard to the species found in Guatimala; since after a most careful examination, no prickles could be seen upon the tongue. The teeth are remarkably long, and smoothly pointed, and with these there can be no doubt, it opens the vein, employing the tongue merely as a sucker.

The *Zorrilla* a species of pole cat, sometimes approaches the houses, and emits a smell so fetid, as to be almost insupportable. I have only experienced the odour from a distance, but found it powerful enough to sicken the stomach for some hours.

and abundantly to satisfy curiosity. The warrior ants, (as they are termed) are very numerous in some of the provinces. They are about the size of the common ant, red, and singularly powerful. In the order of their movements, and the regularity of their internal government, they may fairly be placed in competition with those of Africa, and like them they are eminently useful in the destruction of other vermin.

On the shores of the Pacific the conchologist will find shells of incomparable beauty, besides numerous marine substances, sponges, and lithophytes, both curious and beautiful: in short every branch of the animal kingdom of Guatimala is abundant in objects of interest.

Nor is the vegetable less productive. Of plants remarkable for their flowers or their fruits, for their roots, leaves, shape, or wood, as well as those useful for their resin, gum, or medicinal properties: perhaps a greater variety cannot be found in any part of the world. The mountains and plains are covered all the year with the most beautiful flowers expanding themselves in wild profusion, and "wasting their sweets upon the desert air:" forty genera of fruits are reckoned to grow spontaneously upon the different hills: the most valuable woods, enormous both in circumference and in height, are lost in the thick forests, and resins and balsams, with innumera-

ble medicinal herbs, remain neglected and unknown, because no one will take the trouble of collecting them. The cedars in some parts, exceeding five fathoms in circumference, and 100 feet in height; the mahogany-tree falling little short of this immense size; the valuable *Palo de Maria*, and the incorruptible *Guyacan*, alike surrounded by immense woods of every other kind of timber, reign in silent majesty, undisturbed by the sound of the woodman's axe.

Amidst almost every production both of tropical and intertropical climes, may be named among grains, maize, producing in some parts three hundred fold, and sometimes two or three harvests a year, wheat, barley, rice, potatoes, greens, and all kinds of culinary vegetables.

Among fruits may be enumerated three species of plantains, four of apples, five of pine-apples, five of peaches, three of apricots, ten of *jocotes*, (a kind of plum) pears, melons, grapes, oranges, figs, cherries, pines, besides about forty others, of which the name alone would convey no idea to an European ear. To these may be added, as productions of the country, bark, sarsaparilla, cinnamon, hellebore, musk, coffee, ginger, cassia, tamarinds, aniseed, Brazil wood, indigo, cocoa, cochineal, vanilla, sugar, flax, tobacco, cotton of various species, pepper, sulphur,

saltpetre, and a multitude of other articles ; while among medicinal plants, probably the greater part of the 1200 described by Hernandez, are to be met with in some one or other of the United Provinces.

With such an extensive catalogue of productions, Guatemala would seem destined to be one of the most prosperous and wealthy of republics. What important changes may be produced by revolving years, it is impossible to foresee, and must be left for the pages of its future history to relate. At present owing to the indolence and ignorance of its population, scarcely any thing is produced in considerable quantities, or brought to full perfection ; and the country although rolling in the midst of natural wealth, remains poor, and the mass of its inhabitants wretched.

Of the physical geography of the country, as little can be said as of its natural history. No Humboldt has traversed these regions, and excepting from the statements of natives often strangely inaccurate, no account of the elevations of its mountains or valleys, or of its volcanic phenomena can possibly be collected. The mountains in some places bordering on the Atlantic, in others coasting the Pacific, and again in other situations traversing the middle of the Isthmus, give their own peculiar character to

the face of the country. Upon their different elevations does the fitness of the soil for its various productions depend; and in crossing them the traveller repeatedly changes a hot climate for a cold and chilling temperature.\* Gold and silver, iron, lead, mercury and sulphur are deposited in considerable quantities within the bowels of the mountains; and granite and porphyry form their prevailing geological feature.

From these rise the various volcanic cones which have at different periods by their eruptions, desolated the lands contiguous to their craters. Besides the three peaked *volcan de fuego*—situated in the valley of Guatemala, which has at various periods injured or overthrown the old city, and which still emits smoke and sometimes flame;—seven others may be said to continue still in a state of activity. Tajumulco in the province of Quezaltenango, Izalco near Sonzonate,—Momotombo and Mazaya in Nicaragua,—St. Vincent and San Salvador in the state of the same name, frequently cast out flames accompanied by copious discharges of calcined substances.

\* Indigo is cultivated at an elevation of from 12 to 1400 feet; and cotton and cocoa flourish about the same height; the productions of the temperate zones, are found at an elevation of from 4 to 5,000 feet; wheat is produced upon lands raised from 6 to 9,000 feet above the level of the sea; and pines are found on the tops of the highest volcanoes.

Atitan, situated in one of the interior provinces, and near to the lake which bears its name, had remained for many years inactive, when, on the 1st September, 1827, a loud rumbling noise announced the working of this stupendous furnace, which immediately began to vomit out smoke and sand, in such immense quantities, as to darken the sky for several hours. Lights were procured in the neighbouring villages, and prayers offered, till its violence had, in some degree, subsided. This eruption was accompanied by an earthquake, which was severely felt, not only in the neighbourhood, but at a very considerable distance.

The rivers of Guatemala, in proportion to its extent, are considerably more numerous than those of Mexico; but, excepting for canoes, they are not generally navigable; not only are they obstructed by bars at the entrance, which render it impossible for any large vessel to pass, but owing to their steep declivity, the currents are so rapid as to render it frequently dangerous to descend, and almost impracticable to oppose the stream in the ascent. The principal are the Lempa, Motagua, Limones, Tinto, Platanos, Slave River, Michatoyat, Mosquito, St. Juan, Pantasma, Xicalapa, Paza, Leones and Viejo. Of these some fall into the Atlantic, and others into the Pacific. The Lempa which is by far the largest, and runs



chiefly through the province of San Salvador, has 140 yards in breadth at its lowest ebb, and a current exceedingly rapid.

Besides several small lakes, there are three which both for extent and depth deserve more particular notice. The Lake of Nicaragua well known on account of its proposed junction with the Pacific may rank among the largest in the world, and if the long wished for communication between the two oceans should be effected, will become of the utmost importance to the commercial world. The proposals of different companies have been discussed by congress, but no effectual steps have yet been taken for the accomplishment of so desirable an object. The lake of Peten according to Juarros, has twenty-six leagues of circumference, and in some parts is thirty fathoms deep; and Atitan according to the same author, covers eight leagues from east to west, and four from north to south, has its sides precipitous, in depth is fathomless, and although it receives several rivers, has no visible outlet by which the influx is carried off. The water is fresh and so cold that in a few minutes it benumbs and swells the limbs of those who attempt to swim in it. Each of these with numerous others, abound in fish of different kinds; many of them have little islands in the middle of their waters picturesquely wooded, and some of them are inhabited.

On the banks of some of the rivers as well as on the shores of one or two of the lakes, salt is collected in considerable quantities, and forms in some of the provinces, a considerable branch of trade. Salt springs and sulphureous streams, both hot and cold, are found in the different provinces, and mineral waters, possessing medical properties, exude from the rocks in various parts of the country.

All these things merit the attention of the lovers of science, and make one regret that this interesting and unknown ground has not yet been occupied by some learned traveller, able to favour us with details similar to those we have received of the plains and hills of *Anahuac*, from the pen of the unwearied Humboldt.

The diseases of the coasts for the most part consist of intermittent fevers, which, when contracted by the inhabitants of the temperate regions, are very difficult to cure, frequently clinging to the sufferer till they produce the most perfect mental debility, and oftentimes idiocy. The number of idiots and of individuals in other stages of madness is truly melancholy, and of these the greater part have been produced by fevers contracted on the coast. In some of the provinces the inhabitants are dreadfully afflicted with a swelling in the glands of the throat, vulgarly called "güegüecho:" these sometimes grow to an

enormous size, and when accompanied by idiocy or extreme imbecility of mind, which is by no means uncommon, they furnish a most humiliating and painful spectacle. These swellings are generally attributed to some deleterious quality in the water, and are considered by the natives as incurable. Mr. Coxe in his travels through Switzerland, observed the same disease to prevail in some districts, and remarks, that there also it was not unfrequently accompanied by extreme mental weakness. Whatever be the cause, the effect is most distressing; and although the United Provinces presented more temptations to the European than they at present do, the thought that the climate, the water, and the diseases most prevalent in the country, all conspire in lowering the tone of the mind, and sapping the foundations of man's noblest faculty, would make the most sanguine pause before choosing it as a permanent residence.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Aboriginal Population,—Conquests of Alvarado,—Utatlan,—Palaces, &c. of the King of Quiché,—Languages,—Establishment of the Roman Religion,—Las Casas and the Dominicans,—Population,—Employment,—Mode of Life and Customs,—Taxes,—Physiognomy,—Bodily Construction,—Mental Capacities,—Means of Civilization.*

WHETHER Guatemala was originally peopled from Mexico, or whether at any remote period of its history it was tributary to that power, are questions involved in too much obscurity to permit a positive conclusion. The dim and imperfect records of these semi-civilized kingdoms leave us in perfect ignorance as to the source from whence the tribes of which they were composed issued, and consequently cannot be expected to inform us in detail of the course which the stream of population took, or in what instances the springs of it might be considered independent one of another.

The invaluable researches of the Baron de Humboldt have thrown considerable light on the first of these questions. He supposes America to have been peopled by the migration of various tribes from the eastern parts of Asia, and argues, that "in order to conceive that Asiatic tribes established on the table land of Chinese Tartary should pass from the old to the new continent, it is not necessary to have recourse to a transmigration at very high latitudes. A chain of small islands stretches from Corea and Japan to the southern cape of the peninsula of Kamschatka, between  $33^{\circ}$  and  $51^{\circ}$  of north latitude. The great island of Tchoka, connected with the continent by an immense sand bank (under the parallel of  $52^{\circ}$ ) facilitates communication between the mouths of the Amour and the Kurile islands. Another archipelago by which the great basin of Behring is terminated on the south, advances from the peninsula of Alaska four hundred leagues towards the west. The most western of the Aleutian islands ——— is only 144 leagues distant from the eastern coast of Kamschatka; and this distance is also divided into two nearly equal parts by the Behring and Mednoi islands, situated under latitude  $55^{\circ}$ . Asiatic tribes might have gone by means of these islands from one continent to the other, without going higher on the continent of Asia than the parallel of  $55^{\circ}$ .

and by a passage of not more than twenty-four or thirty-six hours. The north-west winds, which during a great part of the year blow in these latitudes, favour the navigation from Asia to America, between latitudes  $50^{\circ}$  and  $60^{\circ}$  north.”\*

The question of the early independence of Guatemala has been defended by Don Domingo Juarros with considerable zeal; and he has brought forward various arguments to prove that his country never was subjected to the Mexican sovereigns, although he acknowledges that a very considerable emigration took place from that kingdom at a very early period. Leaving this unimportant question to be decided by those who take more interest in the matter than strangers can be expected to feel, we shall try to gather from the early chronicles of Guatemala the true state of civilization at the period of the conquest. In this inquiry the researches of the worthy priest above alluded to, will be found highly valuable.

The romantic history of the noble Incas of Peru, and the sympathy which, notwithstanding the tyrannical character of the man, has been excited for the fate of the unhappy Montezuma, has thrown a more than common interest about the aborigines of the new continent, which makes us

\* Humboldt's Political Essay, vol. ii. p. 343.

anxious to know how far the degree of advancement to which they had arrived, was local or universal. In point of civilization the Indians of Guatemala do not seem to have been far removed from their northern or more southern neighbours

It appears that while Cortes was pursuing his conquests in Mexico, civil war was raging in Guatemala between two of the most powerful nations of the country, the Kachiquels, and the Zutugils. The fame of his exploits having spread far and wide, the king of the Kachiquels sent deputies to him, asking his assistance, and offering submission to Spain. Cortes immediately despatched Pedro Alvarado, with three hundred Spaniards, and a large body of Mexican auxiliaries to subdue the kingdom, and render it tributary to the Spanish crown. He arrived in the beginning of the year 1524, and immediately commenced an attack upon the Quichés, the most numerous and warlike of the thirty tribes, which at this time inhabited the kingdom. These different nations like their Mexican countrymen, were too jealous of each other, to unite against the common enemy, and one by one fell under the "heroic Spaniards unrelenting sword." Notwithstanding this disunion, the resistance made, in some parts was very formidable, and if the accounts of the numbers engaged, be not grossly exaggerated, Alvarado and his troops performed

feats, equal to any that marked the career of Cortes. We are told that the king of the Quichés, joined by various other states, mustered on the plain of Tzaccahá 232,000 warriors, who defended by entrenchments, and surrounded by fosses, lined with poisoned stakes, were completely routed by the comparatively insignificant force of the Spaniards, and in six successive actions were defeated with tremendous slaughter.

The mind sickens, at following the bloody track of these remorseless conquerors, and shrinks from the contemplation of the multitude of these poor wretches, who unaccustomed to the use of gunpowder, were penned up as sheep for the slaughter, and mown down by thousands. The rest of the war consisted only of a repetition of similar scenes, and by the middle of the year the country might be considered as subdued.

The account of the city of Utatlan, the capital of the Quiché kingdom, quoted by Juarros from Fuentes, an ancient historian, would if it may be depended upon, lead us to believe that the Indians of Guatemala were little if at all inferior to those of Mexico or Peru.

He describes the city as being "surrounded by a deep ravine, that formed a natural fosse, leaving only two very narrow roads or entrances to it, both of which were so well defended by the castle, as to render the city impregnable. The centre



was occupied by the royal palace, which was surrounded by the houses of the nobility; the extremities were inhabited by the plebeians. The streets were very narrow, but the place was so populous as to enable the king to draw from it alone, no less than 72,000 combatants, to oppose the Spaniards. It contained many very sumptuous edifices. The most superb of them was a seminary, where between five and six thousand children were educated; these were all maintained and provided for, at the expense of the royal treasury, and their instruction was superintended by seventy masters, and professors." The grand palace surpassed every other edifice, and in the opinion of Torquemada, it could compete in opulence with that of Montezuma, or of the Incas. According to his account, it contained distinct apartments and divisions for troops, for the king, for the queen and concubines, and for the royal family with saloons, baths, gardens and menageries, all in a shape of sumptuous magnificence. From him we learn that their traditions extended during a line of twenty monarchs, before the arrival of the Spaniards; that the crown was hereditary; that a council existed of twenty four grandees; that the principal towns were governed by lieutenants, and that every office was filled by nobles, the greatest care being taken to preserve noble blood unsullied; to pre-

vent mixture, it was decreed that if any cacique or noble, should marry one of plebeian blood, he should be degraded for ever, and all his descendants be rendered incapable of bearing office. By the penal laws the king could be tried by his nobles. High treason, adultery and rape, were punished with death. Murder by being thrown from a high rock, robbery by fine, and arson by death, because says the law fire has no bounds. Sacrilege subjected to death and degradation of the family. Prisoners if they confessed, were immediately sentenced, but if the charge was denied they were subjected to cruel torture.

From all these statements, allowing for a certain portion of fiction which may have been mixed up with facts, it is at least evident that at the period of the conquest, the inhabitants were far more advanced in the state of moral being, than the grade they now occupy. It is equally evident from the numbers brought into the field, that they must have been far more numerous than at present ; since by a census taken by order of the king of Spain in 1778, the whole population only amounted to 797,214.

In the variety of its languages, Guatemala presents a still more singular phenomenon than Mexico ; not less than twenty-five, according to Juarros, being still spoken. The exact correctness of this statement it is difficult to prove ; but

it is certain that a very considerable variety exists, differing so widely, that the people of one tribe cannot understand those of another. That some of the twenty-five are only corrupted dialects of the same language, there can be little doubt, having perhaps as near a resemblance to their parent, as some years ago those of Lancashire and Derbyshire bore to the English tongue; but in how many instances this may be the case, it is impossible to say. Of the Kachi-quel and Quiché, manuscript grammars have been prepared by different friars,—but they appear to be very imperfect, and without lexicons are useless. The Spaniards have taken considerable pains to make Castilian the general medium of communication among the Indians, and have succeeded to a very considerable extent; almost all of them being able to explain themselves in that tongue, although considerably corrupted by the mixture of Indian words.

The whole of the native languages are exceedingly guttural in their pronunciation, and in their construction are formed by what Humboldt terms “aggregation,” having no inflexion of the root. He says, “nothing strikes Europeans more, than the excessive length of the words. This length does not always depend on their being compounded as in the Greek, the German and the Sanscrit,—but on the manner of forming the

substantive, the plural or the superlative. A kiss is called in the Mexican language, *Tetennami-quiliztli*; a word formed from the verb *tennami-qui* to embrace, and the additive particles *te* and *litzli*. The most remarkable example he adds, I have met with of a real composition of words, is found in the word *amatlacuilolitquitcatlaxtlahuilli* which signifies, the reward given to the messenger who carries a paper on which is painted tidings. This word which forms by itself an Alexandrine line, contains *Amatl*, paper (of the Agave,) *cuiloa* to paint or trace hieroglyphics; and *tlaxtlahuilli*, the wages or salary of a workman."

Like the rest of their countrymen, the Indians of Guatemala were idolaters, which soon excited in the minds of the bigoted Spaniards the same chivalric spirit that had distinguished their course in Mexico, while fighting for the honour of the Virgin Mary, and the extension of the Roman apostacy. The Pope and the mass book floated along the stream of blood, and superseded idolatries more harmless perhaps than their own, to substitute the forms of a worship dazzling to the eye, and eminently dangerous, inasmuch as the corruptions of truth are infinitely more difficult to eradicate than errors founded on pure ignorance without system or object. Crowds of monks followed the track of the conquerors, and

gradually rivetted the chains which had been thrown over the land at the point of the sword.

No tradition exists which leads to the supposition that human victims were ever offered here to idols, and the general mildness of the people would seem to repel the thought. Philip II. ordered a correct narrative of the habits and peculiarities of the inhabitants while in a state of idolatry, to be written by the resident priests, but no traces now exist of such a work if it ever was prepared.

But while shuddering at the barbarities exercised under the name of religion, it is pleasant to record a noble and enlightened exception. According to Remesal, Bartholemew Las Casas and others of the Dominican order settled in Guatemala in the year 1536. "Las Casas who was vicar of the convent, had some years before written a treatise, which he called '*De unico vocationis modo*,' in which he attempted to prove, and with great erudition, that divine providence had instituted the preaching of the gospel as the only means of conversion to the christian faith; and that to harass by wars, those whose conversion is sought for, is the means of preventing rather than accomplishing the desired object. This reasoning was deemed fallacious and laughed at, and the author advised to put in practice what he had preached in theory. Las Casas unhesita-

tingly accepted the proposal, and fixed upon a province from which the Spaniards had been three times driven back in their attempts to conquer it. This region was afterwards called Vera Paz, because while the Spaniards were unable to subdue it by their arms, it yielded to the mild persuasion of a few zealous ecclesiastics. Las Casas previous to commencing his undertaking entered into an agreement with the governor that no Spaniard should reside in the provinces subdued for five years.

This arrangement concluded, the Dominicans composed hymns in the language of the natives, in which they described the creation of the world, the fall of Adam, the redemption of mankind, and the principal mysteries of the life, passion and death of the Saviour," (Remesal lib. 3. cap. 15, 18.) "These were learned by some converted Indians, who traded with the provinces they wished to subdue. The chief cacique of the country having heard them sung, asked those who had repeated them to explain more in detail the meaning of things so new to him. The Indians excused themselves on account of their inability to perform it correctly, saying they could be explained only by the fathers who had taught them; and these were so kind, that if he would send for them, they would gladly come and instruct them in every thing. The cacique

was pleased with the information, and sent one of his brothers with many presents to entreat that they would come to make him acquainted with every thing contained in the songs of the Indian merchants. The Fathers received the ambassador with great kindness and much satisfaction to themselves, and determined that one of their number should return with him to the cacique. The chief went to the entrance of the village to meet the missionary, treated him with great veneration, and after having been made to comprehend the mysteries of the new faith, he fervently adopted it, burnt his idols, and became a preacher to his own subjects."

After this glorious triumph of peaceful persuasion over force and cruelty, the fathers returned to Guatemala, and the following year resumed their operations with similar results. In numerous instances they succeeded in collecting the Indians into villages, and brought them to form themselves into societies, and submit to be governed by reasonable laws.

Impatient of this slow though certain process, the Spanish governor despatched troops to the neighbouring provinces, and in some instances subdued the natives; but in others the instant the troops were withdrawn, the villages were abandoned, and the roads blocked up by the Indians,

who concealed themselves in the woods and mountains.

Of the more recent labours of the college, appointed for the conversion of infidels (Coll. Prop. de Fid.) we have no account. At the present day, by far the greater part of the natives are under the spiritual dominion of the Romish church; but on the coasts several tribes still remain entirely unsubdued. In many parts of the interior also, the Indians have not embraced Christianity, and as soon as they are visited in one place, to avoid further importunity they remove their wives, children, canoes, &c. to another, where they remain until again assaulted by similar solicitations. Even among those who profess subjection, idols are very often concealed and adored in secret, and all the exertions of the clergy have been unable to eradicate their affection for them.

Nor is it to be wondered at. With them idolatry, and freedom are synonymous, while Christianity is associated only with slavery and despotism. Conversion to the catholic faith, requires no change of heart; a willingness to resign old for new ceremonies, and to substitute an image of the Virgin in the room of one equally senseless, is all that is asked, and if a few prayers can be recited, popery is content to leave the superstition of the heart undisturbed,



and Satan's throne unmolested. But from the confession of their own bishops even this is with difficulty accomplished. One of them says, "he found the neophytes so little improved in their knowledge of the Christian faith, as scarcely to be able to repeat the prayers in an intelligible manner." Their Latin as might well be expected, was difficult to understand, and he says, "the natives made it half Latin, half romance."

In the review of these strange proceedings, the mind is struck with admiration at the noble and dignified conduct of Las Casas and his dominican brethren. At a time when persecution was the error of the age, they boldly rose above the prejudices of education, and reverting at once to the simplest principles of Christianity, preached, and practised doctrines which many of their successors even in the nineteenth century have yet to learn. Nor did they do it without cost. To effect their labour of love they endured hardships, suffering famine, sickness and injuries, and in many cases sighing for martyrdom, cheerfully resigned themselves to a cruel death. Of such may it not be said, that erecting on a good foundation, "wood, hay, stubble," when in the day that shall be revealed "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is," though theirs may be burnt and the builders suffer loss, yet, "they themselves shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

The absence of all statistical details, renders it impossible to state with any degree of correctness, the proportion which the unmixed Indians bear to the coloured or white population. It differs considerably in the different provinces; and as no data exists, on which a calculation could be founded, conjecture would be idle. Probably the proportion will not differ widely from that of Mexico, where they form in some provinces two-fifths, and in others, three-fifths of the whole population. The greater proportion of these live in villages, built after the Spanish manner, with the church in the centre, before it the square, with the *cabildo* or town house, and the streets crossing each other at right angles: these employ themselves in various ways; some grow maize and vegetables for the markets, others manufacture mats and baskets, or are employed mechanically, while others gain trifling sums as porters or carriers in the neighbouring towns.

A second portion live on *haciendas* or farms; some regularly employed in *trapiches*, or in agriculture, and others dwelling on the estate by permission of the owner, where they cultivate a little maize for their own subsistence, and pay a species of rent, in produce, for the use of the land, besides which they are bound to render occasional gratuitous services to the owner. A third division may be said to consist of those who

are scattered over the face of the country, living either in solitary *ranchos* or huts, or in long and straggling villages; these grow sufficient maize for their own use, which with plantains supplies their necessities, and permits them to remain in a state of barbarism altogether secluded from society.

A fourth class answer to the "lazzaroni" of Italy, sleeping at night under the piazzas of the squares, and lounging in idleness and wretchedness a great part of the day; these also, although a considerable body, find occasional employment as porters, since every white, and almost every coloured man, would think himself degraded by carrying a burden. The two first classes are governed by officers chosen from among themselves, who have the power of imprisonment, and not unfrequently grossly abuse their trust, by making their authority an instrument of oppression. The two latter from their roving life, are under no system of government, and unless they commit some notorious crime, are unmolested.

At a first glance, the whole body would seem involved in the deepest wretchedness, but this is more apparent than real. The only dress of the men consists of a cloth round the middle made of *pita*,\* and the women merely wear a light cotton

\* The fibres of a plant, which when twisted into thread, resembles that made from hemp.

dress, from the middle downwards. Their houses are destitute of all furniture, excepting it be a mat, or at the best a small hammock; the greater part of them sleep on the floor, with the head covered and the feet bare, and if they use any thing for a pillow, it is seldom better than a brick or a stone. Their food, generally maize prepared in different ways, and sometimes a little meat, seasoned with *chile*, a kind of pepper, is always spread upon the ground, and eaten with their hands. The children know no better cradle than the ground, and when they are not slung at the back of the mother, crawl or run naked about the hut or fields.

Thus ignorant not only of the luxuries, but even of what would seem the commonest necessities of life, they know no wants, and however poor and miserable they appear to an European eye, having their hut, their maize, and especially if to this they can add a little spirits, they consider themselves abundantly rich. When oppressed by the *alcalde*, they fly to the priest, who hears all their grievances, and generally sees them redressed. The women suckle their children with great care, and rarely trust them with another, carrying them at their backs whenever they have occasion to go out.

It has been remarked, that it is very rare to meet with any instance of deformity amongst

them, and the observation is correct; but whether this arises from any favourable conformation of body in the Indian, or whether it may not rather be attributed to the fact, that deformed children being generally weakly, seldom survive without a more tender treatment than savages can give, may be somewhat doubtful. The male children are chiefly employed in cutting and collecting wood. and as they grow up become tillers of the ground. All the Indians are exceedingly fond of bathing, especially in warm springs, in which many of them will immerse themselves several times a day. Others use what may be termed the hot air bath. This is a species of large round oven, into which, when heated, they creep, and soon obtain a profuse perspiration over the whole body; while in this state, they suddenly plunge themselves into the nearest cold stream, and appear to receive great pleasure from the shock, never suffering any injury by the practice.

Their marriages and funerals are conducted according to the rites of the Romish church, but to these they add various ceremonies of their own. A marriage is celebrated by savage dances to harsh and inharmonious music; and the funerals present a scene of nightly revel and drunkenness, somewhat similar to a wake among the lower orders of Irish.

With any kind of procession they are highly delighted. When the holy oil is carried to the villages, it is preceded by a drum, and escorted by a troop of Indians. The feasts of the church are observed chiefly by dances, and the discharge of sky-rockets, and other fireworks, an amusement of which they are passionately fond; and as the manufacture of gunpowder is a government monopoly, the practice is of course not discouraged.

Some instances have occurred, in which Indians have died possessed of considerable property; but of late years they have not had opportunities for acquiring wealth, and seldom provide either for age or sickness. As buyers they are cautious, and very much afraid of being deceived, but as sellers they are exceedingly anxious to impose. The men who bring wood, or grass for the cattle, invariably ask three times as much as they mean to take, and I have seen a quantity of charcoal, for which twenty rials was obstinately demanded, at length purchased of the same individual for five rials.

During the Spanish government, a personal tax was imposed upon every Indian, of four rials; by the payment of which, they were exempted from all other imposts, and were not liable to serve in the army. At the revolution this tax was repealed, and they became subject to the duties imposed on the rest of the popula-

tion. The poor creatures by no means approved the change, and for some time brought their rials as usual, requesting they might remain undisturbed. Whatever might be the intention of the repealers, the policy of the measure has certainly proved bad. The idle are now exempt from the annual tribute, and the more industrious who bring the produce of their gardens to market, are exposed to heavy contributions. Always suspicious, they dread every thing that is new, and when vaccination was attempted to be introduced amongst them, they resisted it most determinately, flying with their children to the woods and mountains. Every effort to persuade them it was harmless, was ineffectual; and the attempt was finally abandoned.

To describe the Indian either physiognomically or craniologically, is exceedingly difficult. With the exception of the copper coloured skin, the smooth and strong black hair, high cheek bone, and eye somewhat turned, which may be considered universal characteristics, the variations are innumerable. The forehead although never prominent like that of the negro, and generally very retiring, is in many spacious; and some of the women have by no means, what would be termed bad ones. The inclination of the facial line is widely different in individuals. Thick lips although general, can by no means be called

universal ; and while some of the men are altogether destitute of beard, others have a moderate proportion, and not unfrequently wear mustachios. An expression of countenance in which cunning and melancholy are singularly blended, gives a mysterious air to every look and movement.—but no symptom of ferocity is observable. The women generally look older than they really are, and are mostly given to volubility. The men on the other hand, excepting when under the influence of intoxication, are very silent, and do not show their years on the countenance. Some of them attain a very considerable age ; and although the hair with the greater number does not change with years, I have seen instances where it has become nearly white. Their limbs are mostly nervous, and their bodily shape somewhat square and short. Although incapable of violent effort, they possess a toughness which enables them to endure fatigues that would soon kill the stoutest European. The loads they carry over the mountains for the most trifling remuneration, are truly surprising.

But with all this capacity for endurance, the want of fire and a manly spirit, often makes them appear exceedingly pusillanimous. It is by no means uncommon to see them after a quarrel, weeping like children over the slightest wound,—while their timidity in any time of public alarm



is excessive. This characteristic however, will not apply to the unsubdued natives on the coast; an energy sometimes frightful often distorts their features, while the countenance of the interior Indian is seldom disturbed by violent passions. —This striking difference, does not appear to have been produced by any alteration in their mode of life since the conquest; it is evident that it belonged to them before that period. During the war carried on by the Spaniards, in their attempts to subdue the inhabitants of the coast, some instances of resistance occurred truly astonishing. In one part (after having entrenched themselves in strong places on a mountain which for some time, they defended with the greatest bravery) finding resistance hopeless, and being exhausted by fatigue, and want of provisions, the greatest part of them with their wives and children, precipitated themselves from the highest part of the rock, into the river below and perished. Nor is this account incredible, since a similar determination has been shown by some of the Indians, during the war of independence in Chili and Colombia, while acting as auxiliaries to the Spanish troops. The hatred of one tribe was so great towards the Patriots, that their extermination was determined upon by the independent army, and the whole of them, including women and children were put to

the sword. Their resistance was most desperate, and in one instance, when the lance of a soldier had passed through the body of the Indian, he still continued fighting, and would have killed his opponent but for other assistance. Near these dwelt another tribe possessing similar feelings, and it was determined to send them to Peru, in the hope that they would make good soldiers, when away from their native hills; but from the time they were placed on board the transport, they refused to eat, and only said they were resolved to die. Owing to their repeated mutinies, great numbers of them were shot, while others threw themselves overboard, and scarcely any arrived at the place of their destination. The facts I have on the authority of an officer, who was engaged in the service and who was an eye witness to the first of these dreadful scenes.

Of the capacities the Indians may possess, for the improvement of a superior education, it is difficult to speak, because the experiment has not been fairly tried. In the convents may be found some who have entered as monks or nuns, and they display no inferiority to the others. At different times some who appeared to display talent, have been educated at the university, and it is said that they proved themselves equal, if not superior to any by whom they were surrounded, and two especially distinguished themselves by

the quickness of their apprehension, and the solidity of their judgment, but after a few years all these became the victims of intoxication, under the influence of which, they quickly relapsed into barbarism.

In the imitative arts they certainly excel, and under proper direction, make valuable assistants both in plain building, and ornamental architecture, while the various waxen figures they mould and expose for sale, prove how closely they can copy any object they may have seen. Of imagination they appear to be totally destitute, and never leave the beaten track to form any thing novel or original, nor have they that taste for the beautiful, which the Mexicans so singularly possess.

It is said that ancient monuments, the ruins of their former greatness, still exist ; but in situations remote from the capital, and at which in the present disturbed state of the country, it is difficult to arrive. Juarros gives descriptions of many of these from Fuentes, but it is evident that he had never seen them. The Spaniards and white creoles, appear to know little or nothing of their localities, and insist that a great part of Fuentes' descriptions are fictitious. Still the search would be interesting, and the report of an intelligent traveller valuable ; inasmuch as the slightest ruin would in some degree tend to illustrate the true

state of the arts at the time of the conquest, and prove how far the customs, and progress in civilization of the natives of Guatemala, and those of Mexico, were or were not analagous.

Interesting however as are these researches, a question far more important presents itself in the inquiry, what means are best calculated to raise the natives from their present depressed state, to that rank in society which they ought in justice to enjoy?—The present generation both by their degraded habits and utter ignorance, seem irremediably shut out from any considerable advancement;—but no such obstacle need impede the moral and intellectual progress of their successors. The universal diffusion of such a system of education amongst them, as should insure in their earliest years, the instilment of good moral principles; and the immediate removal of the numerous temptations to which they are exposed, by the multiplicity of spirit shops, are means simple and practicable, and in their effects would prove powerful and effectual. Habit, which with regard to man, has been forcibly and correctly termed “the skin of the Ethiopian, the spot of the leopard, the despot of the soul,” becomes fixed and permanent, before his joints are knit, or his bones fashioned. It is necessary therefore, to secure its formation at the very earliest period; and then the very same process, which has hitherto tended

to draw back those who in after life, have acquired some degree of civilization, to the wretched associations and practices of their younger years, would in an equal degree be exerted to strengthen the newly formed character, and to perpetuate the most valuable of impressions.

Hitherto no anxiety on this subject, has manifested itself on the part of those who are the lawful guardians of this unfortunate race. The tide of opposition to any effectual measures, will for some time necessarily run strong. In the prospect of such a result as is anticipated, petty tyranny sees its despotism overthrown; priestcraft trembles for its empire; while the fears and prejudices of well meaning individuals depict in connexion with it, the spread of a revolutionary and insubordinate spirit. But eventually its accomplishment is certain. The demon of darkness who has so long held with a firm hand, his empire over the finest portions of the New World, has at length received a mortal blow; every day his dying struggles become weaker, and betoken the near approach of that final convulsion which will end only in the silence and powerlessness of death.

## PART IV.

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### JOURNEY FROM THE CAPITAL TO THE SHORES OF THE PACIFIC.

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#### CHAPTER I.

*A Party of Pleasure,—Visit to a Grazing Farm,—Views,—Taking of Cattle by the Lazo,—Medical Men,—Value of Labour.*

WEDNESDAY was the day fixed for our departure. On the previous evening twelve extra horses had arrived from a farm about six leagues distant, where we proposed to spend two or three weeks; and before daylight the note of preparation sounded in our ears. At length we started, and a more motley group can scarcely be imagined. Chaucer's pilgrims to Canterbury could not have displayed a more whimsical variety either of dress or character. First led the way, a friar of the order of La Merced, dressed in the long white flannel gown and little straw hat of his order. Then trotted forward a secular

priest, with black gown and clerical saddle cloth. A Spanish gentleman, dressed in the Mexican fashion, and three others in cotton printed jackets, with high saddles, pistols, and swords, and large shaggy skins, hanging down before their knees, followed; immediately preceding a Spanish lady, seated on a saddle similar to an old English pillion, and an English lady and gentleman, in the costume of their own country; three female servants, with black beaver hats, under which streamed before the wind, their long hair, carefully plaited with pink ribands, succeeded; and Indians with cargo brought up the rear of this heterogeneous company. Let those enjoy the pleasure of being whirled along in a close carriage, at the rate of fourteen miles an hour, who with Dr. Johnson, consider it the height of enjoyment; but give me the romantic interest, which belongs to an American party, traversing mountainous districts on pacing mules.

Nor did the characters of the individuals differ less widely than their dresses. The friar, who had a small case hung round his neck by a black riband, declared it contained holy oil, the tears of San Ambrosio, and other precious reliques, while the lady, who appeared somewhat skeptical, as positively asserted that he would never take the trouble of carrying any thing but brandy: denials were useless, and with a loud laugh, in

which his clerical brother heartily joined, he acknowledged the pious deception, nor seemed ashamed of his impudent imposture.

Leaving on the right the small village of Pinula, we began to ascend the ridge of mountains called Canales, composed entirely of granite, and lined on each side by wild fruit-trees, bending under the weight of their produce. From their summit the road becomes elevated, and commands a fine view of the adjacent country. Wild flowers planted on different hillocks along the road, at the foot of small crosses, wind around the wood, and serve as simple and pious memorials of those who on these spots have met with an untimely death. A few miles further, brought us in sight of the gate leading to lands belonging to the estate, and in a short time we had arrived at the house. At this time it was inhabited only by the *mayor-domo*, and was in a decayed condition; it had been composed of three wings, with elevated corridors, but two of these were now in a ruinous state; in the third, which consisted of five tolerable apartments, we took up our abode. The front corridor was hung round with the long wooden bee-hives of the country, and its situation afforded a very agreeable prospect of the surrounding hills.

The following morning we took a slight view of the estate, which extended about twenty



miles in circumference, consisting of excellent land, in the highest state of fertility, well wooded and watered, and comprising different elevations. The house was surrounded at some distance by a steep ravine isolating it on three sides from the neighbouring country, along the bed of which flowed a small river of excellent water, supplied all the year round by three springs, rising within one hundred yards of each other: the fields near were open, and partook of the character of park scenery, and in every direction furnished the most agreeable walks.

Towards the close of the day we had reached the summit of a high hill, which commanded a fine view of the volcanoes, and the scenery near Amatitan. The sun was just setting with extraordinary beauty. The lake lay stretched like a mirror before us. The mountains belted by a girdle of thick clouds, exhibited their tops shrouded in mist, which partially obscuring the waters, hung like a gauze veil over their surface, and upon the woods which covered the hills. In a short time the sun which had been concealed while higher in the firmament, broke forth behind his mantle of clouds, tinging them with a thousand different colors; the lake glistened as if composed of molten gold,—the mountains seemed on fire, while the fainter streaks illuminated the distance, as the king of day slowly sank behind the hills in indescribable splendour.

Over these beautiful lands roam about 800 head of cattle, and 200 horses, generally inferior in quality; among them were some fine beasts, but the majority were small and bony. This property, including the house and stock, had been lately purchased for a sum equal to about £6000 sterling.

During our stay the live stock was collected in pairs on different parts of the farm, to be marked, the milder ones were driven in flocks, and the more obstinate taken by the *lazo*. The latter sight is interesting to a stranger. On the day fixed for the taking of the wild cattle the requisite number of horses are saddled, and one end of the *lazo*, which consists of a long cord made of twisted slips of hide, is firmly bound round the tail of each horse, small branches having first been wound about it to prevent laceration. The rider then gathers the rest of the cord loosely in his hand, taking care that the extremity which is formed into a noose is free, and the cord unravelled. Thus prepared he approaches the bull, who aware of his object generally starts off at full speed, and is as closely pursued; the animal accustomed to the race, runs and winds with surprising swiftness and celerity, but unable to compete with the horse is soon overtaken by his pursuer, who contrives with the greatest dexterity to throw the loose end of the Lazo over his horns, and the instant he finds it has taken a firm hold

wheels round his horse, who with the other end fastened to his tail opposes his force to that of the bull. The animal finding himself a prisoner, generally submits to be dragged at full speed after the man, who turns towards the pen; but if he be very powerful or restive, the rider instantly gallops round a circle, by which the loose cord is quickly wound about the legs of the animal, and he is suddenly thrown to the ground. This employment often proves a dangerous one. Sometimes the bull turns and attacks his pursuer, when the greatest agility is requisite to avoid the contact; at other times the rider is thrown by the violence of the shock which ensues when the animal succeeds in bringing the horse upon his haunches; to say nothing of the numerous falls to which both are subject, by galloping over unlevel and often rocky ground. Notwithstanding these dangers, this species of chase is the favourite amusement both of horse and man; the former is enlivened by the shouts of the spectators, and the latter is urged forward, by a kind of rural ambition. A spectator scarcely knows which to admire most,—the dexterity of the one, or the docility of the other.

To collect the required number was the work of three days, during which the poor creatures were imprisoned without any thing to eat or drink, and almost suffocated by the clouds of dust

they raised in their attempts to get out. On the third day, the cord was again thrown round the horns of each one, and immediately twisted about their legs, by which means one after another they were forcibly thrown to the ground, and marked with a hot iron. The mode of effecting this was as clumsy and brutal as can be imagined. The same plan was afterwards pursued with the horses, although one died upon the spot, from the violence with which he was thrown to the ground. It was vain to endeavour to persuade them, that milder means would effect their object as well. Ignorant people are generally obstinate. The value of cattle is not great, and with humanity they have nothing to do. A fine cow may be purchased for a sum equal to about £4 sterling, a sheep is worth from 6s. to 7s. The value of a horse, depends chiefly upon his having what is termed the *passo*, an easy pace something between a swift walk, and a gentle trot. They may be bought from £2 to £20; but mules are much dearer, a very ordinary one will fetch from £6 to £8.

The other branches of rural economy are greatly neglected; some butter and cheese is obtained, but in small quantities. Honey is more regarded; the bee hives similar to those described in a former chapter were numerous, and contained two species of bees, one *manso* or tame, which do

not sting, and the other possessing that property in the same degree, as in Europe. The former are the favourites, yet notwithstanding their general character for mildness, we were told that at times they fight with such fury, as to make it requisite to throw over the hive a cloth dipped in some sweet, which attracts their attention, and draws them from the conflict. The bees that sting, yield a species of honey thinner than the others, which will not keep so well.

During our stay in this house, one of the family was suddenly taken ill; and a messenger was immediately despatched to Guatemala for the medical man, who arrived two days afterwards, to see his patient nearly recovered. This dilatory mode of procedure is universal. In country cases, the physician generally comes when the patient is either convalescent or buried. The individual who made his appearance on this occasion, was considered the first of his profession; after the usual excuses for delay, he proceeded to unpack his little box of drugs, which contained purges, tonics and vomits of every description; and taking his patient's pulse, discoursed most learnedly, and at considerable length upon the nature and cause of the disease, which he alternately attributed to nerves, vapours and irritations. For this sapient essay, and sixpence worth of drugs, he received 2 oz. of gold. He

passed the evening with us, and introduced Gall and Spurzheim's theory, of which he was a zealous disciple;—new organs were discovered in new places, and localities given to the old ones, widely different from those Dr. Gall has chosen for them. But with his employers he passed for a most erudite physician, and that was sufficient. Quackery is not confined to age or country. Were a modest and intelligent foreigner to settle here, he would meet with little encouragement; prejudices would be strong against him, and if he did not talk of nerves and vapours, he would get no practice.

Other kinds of labour are not so well paid. The poor barber who travelled the same thirty miles every week to shave the beard of our worthy host, only received a *dollar*; and the Indian who traversed the same ground with his daily load of provisions, thought himself happy in gaining a sum equal to *ninepence* sterling. So widely do professions differ, even when the talents of the individuals may be pretty nearly on a par.

The Indians, who may be considered as serfs of the soil, generally perform these commissions with fidelity. The only risk lies in their encountering spirituous liquors on the way; a temptation often too powerful to be resisted. This estate contained about two hundred of these poor creatures, who at different times had

obtained from the proprietor, permission to build their thatched huts upon the ground, and to cultivate the portion he allots to them. For this permission, they agree to pay him annually a certain portion of maize, to render occasional gratuitous services, and to supply eggs or fowls to the farm when wanted. If they keep a cow, a dollar annually must be paid for its maintenance. This body is governed by an alcalde, and five or six inferior officers elected from among themselves, who has power to imprison, and reports to the alcalde of the nearest town. By the constitution, all the Indians are declared citizens, with equal rights and privileges; but with regard to them, this decree is of no effect. Their condition remains nearly if not altogether, the same as before the revolution. When the proprietor visits his estate, he sends for the alcalde and his officers, who almost kiss his feet, by the humility of their obeisance. He then states the number of fowls, eggs, &c. he wishes to have that day, and the number of men he requires to assist him, and the alcalde's only business is to find them. Probably from ten to twenty, will be constantly employed on the farm, and these receive three dollars monthly, equal to about three shillings sterling a week. Under such circumstances it is evident, that the comfort of the Indian. depends not so much upon any justice he can obtain when op-

pressed, as upon the mildness and humanity of his master. If a robbery be committed, and the author remains undiscovered, the proprietor of the *hacienda* orders all whom he has reason to suspect of being concerned in it, to leave the estate, and if the order be not complied with instantly, sets fire to the huts and maize of the suspected, who are then driven out by force. This is the general kind of punishment, and there is no appeal.

To each of these *haciendas* is appended a small chapel or *Oratorio de la Misa*, where a priest occasionally performs the Romish service; a bell is rung the previous night, and by an early hour on the following morning, a good congregation is generally collected.

The submission of the Indian population to their spiritual instructors, knows no bounds. Every one who passed the priest, when walking with us in the fields bent for his blessing, and received his hand upon their heads, with the deepest humility; the relatives of one poor woman whom he visited when sick, actually placed flowers and branches along the path he had to tread to reach her hut, which ceremony he told us, was in imitation of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. From whom but from their pastors, can they have received such impious lessons? This man was coarse, vulgar, and stupidly ignorant,



and delighted in receiving homage, the poor creatures equally ignorant delighted to pay it.

The number of Indians constantly kept on different estates in this kind of servitude, has a strong tendency to lower the price of labour, and often impedes the introduction of machines, which in the end would be highly beneficial to the country. At the first glance the fixing of a saw mill, upon this estate appeared to us a speculation, which certainly would pay. At a very short distance from the house was a fine ravine, at the extremity of which rose a spring, which in conjunction with others formed a powerful stream, having a considerable descent. The sides were lined with wood, both pine and cedar. The climate was good,—the distance from the capital was short. The requisite machinery might be obtained from the United States, at a very trifling expense. We named it to the owner. He immediately said it could not be made to pay. If wood were wanted for the capital, two Indians were sent to cut a tree, a pair of oxen drew it to its destination, and the whole expense was a few rials. We found on our return to the capital, the force of this argument. Cedar deals twelve feet long, could be purchased for two shillings or two and sixpence. Fir deals for one shilling, or one and threepence, and beams five inches square for a sum equal to about one shilling sterling. Be-

sides this the consumption was small, and the distance from the coast too great to think of exportation. This circumstance in itself is trifling, but it shows how easily foreigners may deceive themselves, by entering upon speculations, and especially by introducing machinery without sufficiently considering the nature, and peculiar circumstances of the country in which they propose to make the establishment.

## CHAPTER II.

*Vale of Petapa,—Lake of Amatitan,—Falls of San Pedro Martyr,—Escuintla,—Salt Works, &c.*

FROM this *hacienda* two of us set out for the shores of the Pacific, following the course of the river Michatoyat, which discharges itself into the great ocean at about 14° north latitude, forming what is termed the Bar of Istapa. Passing through a long lane, formed chiefly by wild fruit-trees, and ending in beautiful meadows, we began to descend by a steep and rocky path into the valley of Petapa. The way was literally choked up with flowers, rising five and six feet high. The descent, which afforded us a fine view of the luxuriant valley at the foot of the mountain, ornamented by old ruins, and bounded by the lake on one side and the mountains on the other, consisted of windings through this immense bed, every instant supplying scenery which truly merited the term paradisaical.

Near the foot of the hill we found a tolerable *trapiché*, where we left our horses in order to visit

the ruins of the old town of Petapa, which was swept away by a flood, about the year 1750, occasioned by the sudden obstruction of the river, which flows down the mountain. The only vestiges now remaining are the ruins of two churches, which stand near to each other, and are of considerable size; one was devoted to the Indian population, the other to the ladinos and whites. Whether this separation was occasioned by the permission of any mixture of Indian superstition in the worship of the aboriginal population, or whether it sprung from that proud distinction which these strange Christians maintained, even at the footstool of God, over their fellow-worms, we know not; in either case it was disgraceful. This spot possessed some additional interest in our eyes, as having been the curacy of the English friar Tomas Gage, before alluded to. The ruins at a distance are picturesque, and not uninteresting on a close examination. In one of the churches a fine cupola, and several small Grecian pillars still remain entire. In the other the side chapels, some of them ornamented by figures half obliterated, are still to be seen; while the body of the church now serves as a bed for a few orange and lime-trees, and ivy and moss have covered the cracked walls. The three small villages which now bear the name of Petapa formed

at the period of the catastrophe a considerable town.

Returning to the trapiché we met with the proprietor, who gave us a very hospitable reception, and showed us his mill, the great wheel of which was turned by a considerable stream descending from the mountain, and forming two small falls, one of about ten feet and the other five. On this trapiché he employs about sixteen men, who receive, some one shilling sterling, and others nine pence a day, and are occupied in the manufacture of *panelas*. The process is very simple: the cane which grows luxuriantly in the valley, is cut and crushed between cylindrical rollers; the juice which flows into the vat beneath, is then boiled, and when arrived at a sufficient degree of consistency, is poured into small hollow wooden beds, the size of the panela, where it cools, hardens, and forms a solid cake, in which state it is sold for the manufacture of *chicha* and *agua-diente*. For these lands the proprietor paid a rent of 100 dollars annually; he had sown the cane and built the hut and mill at a very cheap rate, and at the time we visited was able to produce 680 pounds daily, which reckoning 280 days to the year, afforded 190,400 pounds, or 7,616 *arrobas*, producing at a rial and a half for each panela of five pounds weight, a sum equal to £1,428 sterling. That the manufacture of

these coarse panelas is more profitable in the present circumstances of the country, than that of sugars there can be no doubt, and this accounts for the multitude of these trapichés which are spread over the face of the country. But it is melancholy to remember that money thus acquired is gained at the expense of the whole community;—numerous trapichés cause a similar increase in spirit-shops, and by the multiplicity of these, it is evident that useful agriculture is impeded, the population demoralized, and the aborigines destroyed.

In this vale the thermometer at 12 o'clock stood at 75° Fahrenheit, in the shade; a rise of 7° having taken place in a distance which could not exceed six miles in a straight line. At the farm we had just left, it had stood at about 68° at the same hour during the whole of our stay. Leaving this part of the valley, we soon arrived at the village of S. Miguel de Petapa, which is regularly built, with a neat church, and a spacious plaza: from hence, after passing a tolerably good hacienda, we reached the summit of a ravine, at the foot of which lay the Lake of Amatitan. The sight of this fine sheet of water, three leagues in length, and about a league broad at the widest part, is rendered still more interesting by the nature of its environs; on one side rise abrupt and bold rocks to a height of about

eight hundred feet ; on another, sloping hills, covered with verdure ; while on a third side, cochineal plantations are cultivated to the shores, and backed by the town, bearing the same name as the lake. A few wild fowl skim over the surface of the waters, and moharra, pescadillo, and crayfish are found within its bosom ; the depth has never been ascertained correctly ; its banks gradually shelve till they approach the middle, when they become precipitous and very deep.

At the lake commences the Michatoyat, which increasing as it flows towards the Pacific, forms a considerable river. The town which bears the name of San Juan Amatitan, is of considerable size ; the streets are regularly arranged at right angles, and the houses generally well built. It has a good church, and like most others its celebrated image. The inhabitants chiefly employ themselves in raising fruits and vegetables for the capital,—in fishing in the lake, or in the manufacture of a species of mat. Close to the town is a warm spring, and in the woods at a short distance, are others possessed of mineral and sulphureous properties.

From hence to San Christoval de Amatitan, a distance of about three leagues, the road turns through beautiful lanes, and is perfectly level. Immense forests cover the mountains on each side, and the only sign of habitation, is a valuable

farm belonging to the dominican friars, and two *trapichés*.

On our arrival at the town, which chiefly consists of one long street wretchedly paved, we proceeded to the cabildo or town house, which in the absence of inns, is generally appropriated to travellers. This one might be justly termed a huge shed roughly divided into three parts; one extremity formed the prison, and the other the residence of an Indian,—in the middle department, which was three parts filled with logs of wood, we swung our hammocks and took up our residence. Soon after, we visited the cura, with whom we spent a great part of the evening. He seemed a well read, intelligent man, and possessed a very good miscellaneous library. Juarros, the historian of Guatemala, speaking of this town, says, that in the neighbourhood is found the green chapuli, a large species of grasshopper about a span long; at the extremity of its tail, is a sharp curved point like a thorn, which becomes hard when the animal has attained its full growth. “If killed in this state, and carefully opened, a small bunch of seeds similar to those of the passion flower about an inch long, attached to ramifying fibres, is found in the intestines. These grains being sown will produce a plant like the gourd, which will bear a fruit resembling small pompions as yellow and brilliant as gold; the



seeds of which sown again will bring forth similar fruit, but of much larger size." Such is the account given of the chapuli, which certainly looks apocryphal. We inquired of the cura if the story had any foundation; his reply was, "I have cut the seed from the body of the animal, placed them in water, viewed them through a powerful microscope, when they had every appearance of seed. I have sown them in a flower pot, and they have produced a tree about a foot high, having a pointed leaf, and at the bottom of the stem a white powder, but neither flower nor fruit could I obtain." Such is the history of this wonderful insect; the animal is only found in the months of October and November, consequently we had no further opportunity of verifying the story. The cura assured us the animal could not have swallowed the seeds, as they formed a constituent part of the intestines.

The following morning we set out for Escuintla; the road although rugged, is tolerably level, and the neighbouring woods are said to abound with *vainilla* (the *epidendrum* of Linnæus,) and the *cinchona officinalis*, the bark of which is known by the name of jesuits powder, or peruvian bark. About two leagues from San Christoval we heard a considerable noise, as if produced by the falling of water, and turning through the woods to the left we suddenly came upon the river Michatoyat

which here forms most beautiful rapids; immense pieces of rock seem by the giant hand of nature to have been cast in the most fantastic forms, over which a very large body of water passes with a tremendous current, forming in the space of about 200 yards, twelve to fifteen falls, varying in depth and direction.

A little beyond this is the village of San Pedro Martyr, a collection of miserable huts. We tied our horses to a tree, and entered the *estanco* or spirit shop to get some refreshment, but a scene of misery presented itself too great to be endured. In the middle of the hut was a large fire, on which was boiling a cauldron of fermented sugar. The heat at this time was  $85^{\circ}$  in the shade;—three or four dirty children were sitting on the ground, and two women nearly naked, stretched on a mat, were singing, or rather howling in an advanced state of madness. Leaving this wretched group, we sought shelter under an orange tree, at a little distance, and having procured a guide set out for what is termed here the great fall of San Pedro Martyr.

Penetrating through the woods for about a league, and passing a smaller fall, we arrived at the great cataract, which in fact consists of three, the river being divided at the summit by granitic stones, and in a great measure concealed by hanging bushes; over this rock a powerful body

of water is precipitated from a height of from fifty to seventy feet; several smaller streams throw themselves down different parts of the mountain, and glistening through the surrounding foliage, present a prospect highly enchanting, yet partaking rather of the character of the romantic than the sublime.

Leaving this spot through fields of the sugar cane, and fording three rivers, the latter of which was deep and had a rapid current, we entered the woods that lead to Escuintla; for about eight miles the road is tracked, through a thick forest of timber. In some places the *banana* or plantain tree, (*Musa Sapientum*,) grows to a very considerable height, and spreads itself in the wildest abundance, while in others thick bushes of convolvuluses and dahlias, rising from six to fourteen feet, bent across the path, and obscured every other object from the view. These woods are singularly rich, both in animal and vegetable productions; the most beautiful birds inhabit the thickest parts of the forest, and the cotton tree, the indigo plant, and the palma christi, grow wild among the bushes, the former we observed in flower as we passed along.

The situation of the town called La Concepcion Escuintla, is by no means unpleasing; in the vicinity are numerous agreeable walks; and a fine river which flows close to the town, affords con-

venience for bathing. Near the plaza are a few good houses, and a very handsome church, at this time however in ruins ; the earthquake which had then taken place about three months, had opened the walls and thrown down the cupola, and the vestry was now alone used for the purposes of worship. From the summit of this building, a remarkably interesting prospect presented itself on the evening we ascended. On the east and north-east, the dark foliage of the thick woods covering a considerable tract of country, and varied only by the curling smoke of a few scattered huts, were backed by a fine ridge of mountains covered with wood, and terminated by volcanic cones, whose tops were enveloped in thick clouds ; while on the west and south-west the setting sun illuminated the fertile flat country, as he bathed his beams in the great Pacific, whose waters formed the last ridge on the western horizon. The climate of Escuintla is very warm, the thermometer stood at 88° a difference of twenty degrees having taken place during a ride of about fourteen leagues ; and if considered in a straight line, a distance of not more than half that number.

From Escuintla the following morning we set out for a *Trapiché*, about three leagues on the road towards the coast, which from hence becomes perfectly level, and as beautiful as can be de-

sired; on this part of it some rice was cultivated. The entrance to this establishment, was through an alcove formed by palms, *cocoa*, cypress, orange and other fruit trees, and the grounds near, were laid out in a much better style than any we had yet seen. The wheels of the machinery were lighter, and on the best principle, and the whole clean and in good order, but nothing was manufactured except *repardura* or *panela*.

About three leagues further we arrived at the village of Mistan, which consists of a few huts, and after another league reached Masagua, a small village built in a circle cut out of the wood; it like the rest has its decayed church and boasts its miraculous image. The whole of this road lies through thick forests, across which a narrow path has been trodden; on every side are gigantic trees some of them measuring from thirty to thirty-five feet in circumference, and towering to an elevation of from eighty to ninety feet; around the trunk of each of these winds some creeper to the height of forty and fifty feet,—these delicate plants wreathing themselves around the sturdy sons of the forest, give to the woods of America a charm peculiarly their own.

From hence to Ipsanguasati a solitary hacienda, to Naranjo a similar one, and to Overo a still worse, a distance of about 10 leagues, the road

bears precisely the same characteristics. At the latter place we arrived towards the evening, and a more inhospitable reception it would have been impossible to have received; the only place in which we were permitted to pass the night, was under a shed, compared with which the most miserable European cow hovel would have been a palace; nothing could be had for money, and hungry and fatigued, we stretched ourselves to pass a restless and a sleepless night. The whole atmosphere seemed alive, the air was loaded with sand flies, mosquitoes and every other kind of the innumerable kinds of insects, which with all their tribes, are the torment of travellers in hot countries. At length day broke and we proceeded to the *salinas* or salt works, which are situated on the shores of the ocean, and consist of three villages about a mile distant from each other called Manglar, Santa Rosa, and Sapoti, at the latter we arrived by an early hour. These salinas are in a miserable condition, and consist merely of a few huts, under which are coarse wooden vessels half filled with earth; upon this the salt water is poured, it oozes into a vessel below, and is then boiled in earthen vats, till it assumes a consistency, is dried in the sun, and offered for sale without undergoing any farther process.

### CHAPTER III.

*Bar of Istapa,—Fisheries,—Vampyres,—Rock of Mirandilla,—Alotenango,—Almolonga,—The two Volcanoes,—Ascent of the Volcan del Agua, &c.*

FROM Sapoti to Santa Rosa, and from Santa Rosa to Raudal, a distance of about two and a half leagues, the road is level, but obstructed by immense quantities of bushes and low shrubs. The latter place, only a fisherman's hut, is situated about a league from the mouth of the Michatoyat, which forms a bar at some short distance. There is no other mode of going thither than in miserable canoes, which are polled along the *esteros*, or inlets of the ocean, the banks of which are lined with mangroves. Near the mouth of the river there are a couple of huts, inhabited by fishermen, who there pack and salt fish for the capital, of which a considerable quantity is dried and sent up. The population of these places consists chiefly of mulattoes and negroes, with a few Indians; they have a small church, but as the climate is not considered good, no priest will live amongst them. The average heat in the

middle of the day is from  $88^{\circ}$  to  $90^{\circ}$ . The number of insects is considerable; some of the men were horribly disfigured by the bites they had received. The shore is bold and steep, but the high surf which here rolls itself majestically in a long heavy wave towards the land, frequently dashes over its boundaries, and lightly inundates the neighbouring soil; near the bar of the Michatoyat it is however lessened, and large sailing boats might come up the river generally without danger.

This spot is celebrated as being the place where Pedro Alvarado equipped his armaments in the years 1534 and 1539. Of the advantages which it possesses over Sonzonate as the port of Guatemala, notice has been taken at length in the chapter on the trade and commerce of the republic. In its present state three or four hundred adventurers landing on its banks, might in three days enter the capital without encountering an enemy; and if determined, would be more than sufficient to subdue the troops appointed for the defence of the city. It has been said this bar is formed by the river Guacalate, but this an error; the Guacalate flows near the Michatoyat, but does not join it. Attempts have been made to cut a canal that should unite the two rivers, by which it was supposed the body of water would be sufficiently increased to remove the bar; this



plan however has not yet been carried into effect, and it is very doubtful whether the benefit would be sufficiently great to repay the labour.

At Sapoti we slept under a somewhat better shed, though still greatly annoyed by the multitude of flies, and chilled by the heavy dews which fall near the shore. The following day we returned to Naranjo, where we again passed the night in the open air, drenched by the dews, and tormented by an additional enemy, the vampyre; these animals a few days before our arrival, had killed no less than thirty fowls, belonging to the farm. As we had passed through this place two days before, they had told us that one of the people was somewhat unwell with fever, and inquired if brandy were a good thing for him. We of course warned them against it, and recommended a purgative plant which grows in the neighbourhood; but they persisted in their own remedy, and thirty-six hours afterwards the man was dead and buried.

Returning to Mistan through the woods, we noticed a few deer, the *guacamaya* or great macaw, and several wild peacocks; these birds on the wing display their splendid plumage to great advantage. Vultures here as in every other part of the republic, are abundant; the body of a calf which had just died on the road, was literally covered with them, struggling in crowds for a

footing upon the carcase. The voraciousness of these filthy birds is almost incredible, and the exactness and rapidity with which they reduce bodies to the most perfect skeletons, cannot be surpassed by the most acute anatomist.

At Mistan we turned from our former route, and crossing the river Guacalate, began to ascend in the direction for the *Peña de Mirandilla*. The road we found generally woody, and the path so covered with bushes and shrubs, as to be in some places almost impassable; the river in this direction has rapids for nearly a league, and several streams casting themselves down the sides of the mountains, form small cascades of considerable beauty. The Peña or Rock of Mirandilla is a bold projection of granite, which rears its head considerably above the neighbouring mountains, and appears to have been struck by lightning; the middle part has evidently been swept away by the electric fluid, leaving two bare ridges, which from their elevated and solitary situation, present a somewhat singular aspect. At the foot of the mountain is a ruinous trapiché, where we passed the night; the roof had partly fallen in, and some of the walls been opened by the recent earthquake. Between Mistan and the Peña, a distance of not more than eight or nine leagues, we found a difference of temperature equal to ten degrees.

From this unfrequented spot we turned towards the Antigua, passing between the two celebrated volcanoes. In this situation the mountains exhibit themselves in aspects singularly interesting; the one towering to a height of above fourteen thousand feet, presents a rich and diversified soil, clothed with verdure to the very summit, and girded by a belt of thick forests,—the other rising to an elevation equal if not superior, exhibits its three bare and rugged peaks, covered with dried lava and ashes, still trembling under the working of the mighty furnace within, and breathing out a column of pale blue smoke, which perpetually ascends from its crater. The contrast is striking,—the horrible and the beautiful in nature, are not often to be met with so closely united, or linked together as these are by the junction of their bases. The greater part of the road between the two, bears evident marks of the violent shocks to which it has been subject; immense chasms formed by the opening of the hills, still remain in the rude state in which nature left them, when she convulsively tore them asunder; huge stones seem to have been hurled in every direction, and lay in the wildest confusion; while in some parts the deep bed of ashes, and cinders, and scorified lava, which at different times have been vomited forth, produce an appearance of desolation, strangely opposed to other

parts closely contiguous. In these latter, the volcanic substances which only lightly strewed the ground, have been covered by a new strata of decomposed vegetable matter, over which trees, and shrubs have spread themselves, and aromatic plants now shed forth their fragrance.

By noon we arrived at the village of San Juan Alotenango, situated at the foot of the mountains. It now consists only of a few Indian huts, the town was ruined by the great earthquake of San Pedro Martyr, and the church and convent had been lately destroyed by fire. The curate of this place informed us, that he had attempted with a friend to ascend the Volcan de Fuego, but that after arriving at the middle of the mountain, the ascent became so precipitous, and the trembling of the mountain so excessive, that they were obliged to relinquish their purpose. The last eruption of this volcano took place about two years ago, when flames issued from the crater, and ascended to a considerable height, immense quantities of stones and ashes were cast out towards the west, and the race of monkeys who inhabit the neighbouring woods, almost extirpated.

From this village we proceeded to Almolonga or Ciudad Vieja, celebrated for being the spot where Alvarado first pitched his tent, to form a capital. The fate of this city has been before re-

lated; fourteen years after its foundation a dreadful eruption of the volcano, accompanied by an immense torrent of water, overwhelmed its buildings, and swallowed up a great part of the inhabitants. It is now composed only of Indian huts, and chiefly cultivated for cochineal gardens. In all kinds of agriculture the lands are still turned up by the hoe, and oxen draw by the horns. Horses are very rarely to be seen in harness.

From Almolonga we came to the Antigua, where we spent a few days, one of which was devoted to the ascent of the Volcan de Agua\* (water volcano.)

This beautiful and gigantic mountain is in figure a perfect cone, its base is computed to have eighteen leagues of circumference, and its height to be 14,500 feet. The ascent by the road is calculated at from three to four leagues, and its crater measures one hundred and forty yards, by one hundred and twenty.

Leaving the old city a little before day light, we soon arrived at the convent of San Juan Obispo, which stands upon its base, surrounded by a few huts, and almost buried in bushes and flowers. From this point the ascent begins, and from hence to the small town of Santa Maria is

\* That this is an extinct volcano there can be little doubt, although no tradition exists of fire having ever issued from its bowels.

gradual, and can be accomplished on a mule. In the whole of this region wheat might be advantageously cultivated, the soil is good and in some parts luxuriant. A variety of plants grow wild, among the shrubs which spread themselves on every side. Among the rest we found the tea plant.

Santa Maria which is situated at an elevation of about 7,500 feet, is a considerable Indian village, and contains a population of three or four thousand, who chiefly find employment in the old city. In the colder months, many of them are occupied in carrying snow from the mountain, for the supply both of the Antigua and the capital. Here we procured guides, and set forward on foot; the ascent we found steep and painful, the path which was slippery with the dew, affording us a very uncertain footing. From the village, to the height of about nine thousand feet, only a few scattered pines, two or three cherry trees, and some wild apples diversify the scene. Soon after this we enter the middle region of forests, consisting almost entirely of American oaks; the soil here was composed of an exceedingly rich black loam, the wild cane we found growing to an amazing height and thickness. The hand plant (*arbol de las manitas*,) or *cheirostemon platanoides*, growing to a height of 40 feet, with its corolla glistening in scarlet and

gold, and many others were flourishing luxuriantly. A little beyond these, the keen cold air sweeps over the sides of the mountain unshielded by forests, and as we gradually ascend in the scale of vegetation, pines again present themselves almost devoid of foliage, and highly resinous. These continue till we reach the summit, and spread themselves on the margin of the crater, among the rocks and stones, which are scattered around them.

By about 2 o'clock we had arrived at the top very much exhausted; the clouds which had gathered during the ascent, now formed a thick veil around the mountain considerably below us, through which it was impossible to pierce, and we were thus in great measure disappointed of the view we had expected to enjoy of the surrounding country. The spacious crater is completely concave, and produces a powerful echo, great numbers of huge stones, covered with moss and grass, are scattered over its surface, which is sterile and unproductive. The thermometer at 2 o'clock, P. M. stood at  $42^{\circ}$  the difference between the base and the summit at the same hour being about thirty degrees.

About 3 o'clock we commenced the descent, which although more rapid was not much less painful than the ascent; the steep slippery

path, kept us almost continually on a run, except when interrupted by falls, from which our guides although possessing the advantage of bare feet, were not exempt. As we descended the clouds partially cleared off, and we enjoyed the prospect of the different towns and villages, varying in elevation, which are spread at the foot of the mountain. On a favorable day the view from the summit is one of the most extensive that can possibly be enjoyed, being bounded both on the north and south, by the two oceans, while eastward the province of San Salvador, and westward the plains of Chiapa may be discovered. By five o'clock we had again arrived at the Antigua, completely worn out by fatigue, and although gratified by the excursion, feeling no anxiety to make a second trip. The following day we bent our course homeward, and arrived safely at the capital.

THE END.



## ERRATA.

A considerable portion of the present Volume has been printed from manuscripts hastily thrown together, in consequence of which some errors have escaped observation.

The quotation from the Journal at Page 136 in which Louisiana and Georgia are referred to, was not intended for insertion. The reference to those states, the author is now aware was altogether erroneous. In the early part of the Volume, the mark denoting seconds (") has been affixed to those figures which represent minutes ('); these errors will not however be found to have occurred after page 184.

Page 229 *for* Dr. Rhy, *read* Dr. Rhys.









